

## C2C Ep. 24 - English

[00:02:13] Welcome to Coast to Coast. My name is Lilly Weinberg, I'm here joined by my colleague Lilian Coral. Hey, Lilian, how's it going? Hi, how are you?

[00:02:21] Good. I'm so happy to be reunited with you on Coast to Coast and it's hard to believe that we've actually been doing this for over a year.

[00:02:33] Yes, we started these shows soon after that pandemic started, and so it's been a year and we've all gone through so many changes and I'm really excited to join you again in this dialog.

[00:02:47] Yeah, me too. And really, as you said, the purpose of the purpose of Coast-to-Coast really was to look at cities during this rapid period of change with respect to the pandemic that was going on. And we've looked at so many different topics from public spaces to mobility to technology with an extra emphasis on equity and how we think about exclusivity in our cities. And now I think it's a really interesting time because we are talking about this other day and it's now really we're thinking about adaptive recovery and our cities and how cities can build forward, build back better. And I think that we're going to have a really interesting conversation today about the evaluation on public spaces and how really cities can move forward with these findings.

[00:03:41] So I would love to hear what you think about that and what we're going to talk about.

[00:03:46] Yeah, I mean, I think that's the question for all of us, right, is we all start to get vaccinated. I know I've got my one shot in my neck, shots coming in next week. Now it's like, well, what is this new world look like? Right. And so what's great about working at night and partnering with colleagues like yourself? Right, is we've been talking about public spaces and the importance of public spaces at night. And today we're really going to talk about equity equity in the public space and highlight some new research on what it means to have community led public spaces and how that really prepares to revitalize and reinvest in the spaces. As we recover and open up our cities, we're going to reflect on covid-19 and our nation's racial reckoning and the role that public spaces have played in our communities. And we're all of us. And we're also going to talk our guests are going to talk really about how we leverage this moment to build more inclusive, equitable public spaces moving forward, excited for our guests.

[00:04:43] So let's welcome them on board. First, we have Tocheri on the program, manager of the Centennial Park site. We're also joined by Alexa Busch, urban designer, director of the east region for the city of Detroit, and Julia Jay, the director and team leader of Gale, who led the research. That's really going to ground our discussion today. So they revise their bios are in the invite. We encourage you all to check out more about their work. And they may be familiar to many of our guests today. But the way we're going to structure this is Lilly and I are going to leave an interview and a conversation for about twenty five minutes, and then we're going to switch it up to type to take the live questions from the audience to get you all involved and see what is resonating for everyone out there. So, Lilly, I want to start us off.

[00:05:33] Yeah. Thanks for the Tapan and thrilled to have Julia Atash and Alexa to have you guys join us. So thanks a lot for that.

[00:05:45] And so this conversation is anchored in research, research that that Knight Foundation partnered with, with on. And we'll also link to the research and the chat box, as you guys were thinking about your questions in the audience. But first, I want to start with some context setting. How you all are. How do you think about community led public spaces? How do you think about engagement for public spaces? And I want to start with you, Julia, to tell us a bit about the evaluation and that. And Gayle partnered on at a high level. What were some of the findings that we had around community led public spaces? And please, when you're talking about this, if you can define two for our audience members, what is community led mean? So I'll hand it off to you.

[00:06:32] Julia Shaw. Thank you, Lily. And good afternoon, everyone. It is a pleasure to be here and to share the stage with such inspiring practitioners. So back in the summer of twenty twenty at night, engage scale to develop an impact assessment that could uncover and document the factors that shape engaging in equitable public spaces. The assessment focused on seven projects and Afrim, Detroit, Philadelphia and San Jose and use the multi method approach to explore how the sites came to be and how they're working today. They represent neighborhood parks, city wide destinations and nature spaces. And when we say impact assessment, I think it's important to point out that we were not asked to say whether these spaces were working or not. Good or bad. Not at all. They were all chosen because. Because of. The impact they're already having and the leadership that has already brought them to life and so I think our charge is really to figure out what are these core drivers and factors that lead to to equitable and engaging outcomes and how can we amplify the great work that practitioners like Aleksa and Tasch are doing and and in a way that more practitioners can learn from. So when we talk about community led, we mean places where people who live in the neighborhoods or cities where these public spaces exist and say neighborhoods don't have the type of space and the reach it has, how they're engaged and invited to have an active role in the site throughout its lifecycle, from inception to design to participation in ongoing governance, programing and operations.

[00:08:29] And we also know a community doesn't just mean one thing. There are many different types of communities within a community. So it's important to think about how those multiple groups are reached as well. What we found are that spaces that are community led, adapted to the local needs and fostered more equitable access and greater resilience during the pandemic. So we were looking at sites and the impact they were having pre pandemic. But of course the the research focused on this past year, too. And so what this actually means is that these sites were creating a way for engagement to happen throughout. And I think many of the listeners on this program probably know engagement is important. And I think what these projects that is really tailor that to the specific needs of their communities and really thought about how they could build trust and partnerships with residents and especially communities of color that had experienced active disinvestment in their neighborhoods over the past decades and really recognize that time was needed to build trust and listen and and really think about how these projects could meet community needs. And then that engagement increased during the pandemic to develop responsive programing and support changing needs. So I'd say overall, the findings really highlight the power of public spaces have to serve as a platform for trust building, for community development and as a key factor in in covid-19 recovery strategies.

[00:10:14] Yeah, that's exactly right. And and what I found so powerful was and the report I mean, it's the community led public spaces, increases usage, increases of Taffet, increases trust. And that really came out loud and clear. And then there's that ripple effect.

[00:10:31] I want to pass it to to touch and hear directly from you as a as a community leader within Philadelphia and how you think about community led public spaces through your work, if you can get some context setting.

[00:10:51] Sure.

[00:10:52] Hi, everybody, I'm glad to be here and stated my name is Tocheri Random, the program director for Centennial Parkside Community Development Corporation.

[00:11:02] We're located in the East Parkside section of Philadelphia, directly across the street from the zoo.

[00:11:12] OK, so so in reference to our public spaces in and becoming more active, we're still we're still reeling, reeling from the riot and in as we go forward as a community, we are recognizing that it's it's a process for us to to feel comfortable enough to come out into our park spaces or community spaces, even sometimes our playgrounds. And it's it's a work in progress. But I think that what it requires is the constant conversation about what that needs to look like from everything from mapping out our safe spaces and corridors to what what walkability looks like to even things as simple as sitting on our park benches, especially for our young men of color, that could get a little bit tricky. So right now, we're we're there's still a little bit of apprehension sometimes about coming out into our public spaces.

[00:12:26] But we're working on what that that needs to look like, especially in in lieu of obviously the restrictions from covid-19 and and all of those things that we have to be so conscious of in terms of of our help. But what I can say is that when people do have the opportunity to go out in our Parkside Edge, where we basically have most of our activities, is it really is a very, very busy street corridor area, like there's constant traffic moving back and forth. So what we think about engaging activities in those areas, we have to be really careful about a number of things. But people are because of the pandemic, people want to come out and they want to ride their bikes and mask up and and do all of those things that sometimes they weren't really doing. So exercise is a big thing on our corridors walking. And so we try to take advantage of those moments that we can take advantage of safely.

[00:13:28] It's great and we're going to we're going to dig into some of the really good work that that you've done. But I want to go next to Alexa and the work that you're doing in Detroit. Tell us a bit about how you think about community led public spaces. What does that mean to you?

[00:13:43] Absolutely. And every one of us here from the planning department with the city of Detroit, I think for us, it's really interesting to be considering this work in response to sort of what does recovery look like after covid-19? Because a lot of where we began the work, especially at Ella Fitzgerald Park, which is highlighted in the report, was coming out of the city of Detroit's municipal bankruptcy and really trying to define what would inclusive recovery look like in neighborhoods in a majority black city in America. We really knew at that point that a top down way of working at the city really wasn't going to work and really needed to come up with a way to be more collaborative and to build the trust with residents to enable us to do that. We are thinking early on was that public space really had to be at the heart of a recovery like that that was truly inclusive, that we did want to create a vision with residents in the neighborhood about the future of their community. But to do that, Juliette raised a great point. What does that look like in communities that have been

long disinvested majority black communities that haven't seen resources? How could we as a city who just come through bankruptcy, rebuild that trust with people, build a sense of belief and hope that we were actually going to follow through with the things that we said we wanted to do and that the investment was really for people in these communities who had stayed as opposed to for someone else, for someone who might come in the future. But that that gap that Julia identified of bridging the the history of the experience that people had had, both with the city development, everything else really led us to be very intentional, I think from the beginning about the role of community in the whole visioning and planning process and doing the work to figure out how to engage people where they were to create a really and give them a really authentic and meaningful voice in what are these public spaces. But bigger than that, what's the vision for their community going forward?

[00:15:49] This is great. I'm taking a lot of notes because I think what you're all really what I love that you're all hitting on is that the idea that these communities have residents that have been there for a while and there is a lot of distrust, and now we've gone through a really period where everyone is raw in some ways. I don't know that there's a better word for it. And so I love the point like now is we're coming back and we are recovering. How do we recover with the people that have been living there? I know I work in a space where I see the future city and it's the future, but it's like how do we focus on the people that are there? So maybe we'll take turns with both of you. So now kind of just telling us with this context, how have you been pivoting? Can you tell us a little bit more of the examples that your your work is, is is exploring? And also, what have you learned in the moment with respect to engagement in public space that you really think has maybe has surprised you a bit about about this moment in time? You want to take that one first?

[00:16:56] Sure. Well, we had to just like the rest of the nation, we had to make a rapid pivot.

[00:17:04] We didn't want to lose momentum in this. This was really important for us. And especially during this time, I think it was imperative that we show as an organization that we were cohesive and unified in our leadership. And so what we didn't want to do was skip a beat. And so we hit the ground running as a team that I'm so super grateful for so many respects. But we we had to go into a virtual component, and that proved to be something that was really strong for us, especially when it comes to a to our young people, because I think we lose sight of how or we can easily lose sight of how this affects them as well. And so we have a strong focus on our youth component as well as the rest of the neighborhood. And so we went into programing for for art and creativity. We went into programing for things that people might really use as a tool and be that would be very useful for our community, like financial literacy. We have programs every week. We also went into discussions with our young people, specifically our young black males, about how they're feeling in this time of unrest, which is has proven to be very helpful in the conversations, sort of like our tabletop conversations or read tabletop conversations.

[00:18:37] So we have a group of 12 young black men who come to the table every week and they talk about things that that affect them in the news and current events and things that are happening around the nation. So it helps us to be able to set the stage in a program for four other things that are coming up in the future and into build something that's a bit more robust as we come out of these times for for with the pandemic. So to answer that question specifically, I would say we went into virtual programing and some of the things that I've learned about our public spaces is is kind of like that, saying you never miss the water to the well, runs dry.

[00:19:26] And so these spaces that we have taken for granted for all of this time, all of a sudden when you're quarantined and you're in a house and you're thinking, oh, good Lord, I need to get out of the house, what I'm going to do so so so you go outside, you put your mask on and you breathe. And somehow that necessity to pull yourself away, just it just it gets rid of all of the trepidations and the fearlessness because you just want to go sit outside and get some air. So you do you do what you have to do and you grab your mom or whoever, and you just go outside and take a walk.

[00:20:00] And we are very fortunate to have our benches and our porches on the Parkside Edge, which, you know, prior to covid Day and through covid, because we have very dedicated people who work on our parkside edge, is just a beautiful place to be. It's beautiful. And so I think people, even though there are still some apprehension and there's still fear of covid, they get out and they are taking advantage of certain places.

[00:20:33] That's great to hear. So what what have you. Right.

[00:20:37] Yeah. You know, I would build on that same point that tax raises is the big pivot for us was going to virtual early on in the pandemic just when there were so little known about what was going on. And I think what it what it showed us was a couple of different things. I think we'd always been champions for public space and been connecting it to economic development. And I think more than anything, the pandemic has just shown that the resilience that that can give a community, be it that opportunity to meet people and actually socialize safely outside the way that businesses have spilled out onto the streets. I think all these times that we were making the case for public space, it's really proven its value during the pandemic that we're hopeful leads to continued investment in the public realm. We also learned that all of that investment into people that we had done, I think community engagement can become very transactional where you're like, I'm going to go to the community and ask them what they think and then I'm going to write it down. I'm going to do something and then see you later. You know, we really approach it as relationship building that I think for us that pivot to virtual only works because we had real relationships with people where we we knew how to find them. We knew the block club leaders who could help get people connected. But that investment in. Social capital, as much as the physical space really paid off in terms of our ability to keep engaging with people, we were really surprised in the beginning. We really asked to that question that was raised of momentum like, hey, do you guys even want to talk to us about this stuff or are you just trying to figure out, like, how do I manage my family and my kids in the in the crisis of the moment? And we were really taken aback that most of the people we spoke to in the community were like, nope, absolutely do not stuff like, no, we don't want the investment to stop. We don't want you guys to go away. We want to keep engaging around what this means in our community that that was really kind of surprising and exciting for us. I think the other big pivot, and I don't really have a good answer yet, it's something we're just sort of dipping into and also learning what the needs are and what the partners might be. But Lily, and you talked about this issue of being really Ron, you were talking about your conversations with young black men. We really think that, like, mental health is going to be a really huge theme for us, that we think there's a place for having some of those conversations and using public space as a platform. But that's an area that I know we're all thinking a lot about in terms of, yeah, what's next and how do we come together around recovery?

[00:23:11] Yeah, and I love this point about the resilience and the engagement piece being so critical and having had some engagement experience and connection before making

community more resilient. Juliette, to you and this report which have already had a sneak peek about, so I'm excited for you to talk some more. What interesting lessons did you get out the report in terms of covid-19 especially excuse me, in terms of what did we learn that actually applies to covid-19 and that recovery?

[00:23:44] Yeah, I'm just nodding my head vigorously to what extent and Tosh just said, especially around just getting outside and how that can make a world of difference. I have two small kids and things can get quite tense in the house, in an apartment and going outside can really, like, make everything else for a little bit.

[00:24:09] And I think that's something that was really, really made clear through this work. And this past year is just public spaces, especially our local neighborhood ones, including streets and sidewalks are not just nice to have amenities. They are they are vital community assets and and for for exactly what Alexa was just saying, like for our mental health. And that was something we even looked at in the study and and heard from our survey respondents that neighborhood parks in particular were being used to support mental health just to help people feel better during this time. And I think, you know, we've seen there these spaces are also vital for helping businesses stay afloat. For artists reach, reach new new audiences share their work for citizen and people to come together to express opinion right during times where civic expression is so vital. And I think our hope is that the findings from the study can really help show that as we think about the recovery and as we think about how to really invest in cities and strengthen cities, is that public spaces are seen as these platforms that, while they may be, don't always perfectly fit into the infrastructure box or don't always line up with the transportation investment that they actually need to be considered with these investments because they can they can be these platforms that build trust so that more change can happen in a way that really supports a neighborhood. And what residents have been asking for for a lot of times, years, decades, and and they're they're really considered vital components of the pandemic. And I think, as both Tasha and Alexis said, too, it's not just the spaces themselves. It's the people that that bring these spaces to life, the organizations, the city agencies that that help support the programing. And the residents do a lot of the programing, too. And that should be something we continue to invest in. And and the maintenance and ongoing operations of these spaces also needs intentional investment.

[00:26:34] Know that trust point is so is so important. And so let's talk a little bit about that torsional, except we know that open does not mean inclusive. We've talked about it on the show throughout last year and several episodes and especially for communities of color. So how are you both addressing this within your public spaces? And you've already alluded to some of this, but can you go deeper? Maybe we'll start first with you. I love that table talk example you've already shared with us.

[00:27:05] Yeah. You know, trust these conversations. Can't you can't just do one and then hit it and quit it. You got to really make sure that the conversations are ongoing and sometimes you even have to really be specific about the topics because people sometimes have a fear of having the hard conversations in as an organization who leads one of the organizations that leads the community, it's kind of up to us to do the deep dove go into the community and talk about things very candidly that may be on people's minds. You know, we have a vast community of senior home owners who are fearful sometimes of coming out of their house, their homes, because there's so much gun violence in our neighborhoods. You know, you can't you know, sometimes you're just you're afraid for your kids to even get off the bus, you know? And so it's so we got to talk about what that looks like and in the fear of of moving around, but but not only just the the things that are dark,

we also have to have conversations about the things that we want to see, you know, the good things and the happy things, just like we have things that are not so good. We have our place dreams happening. And we have, you know, again, our our programs that have been for our young people. From week to week, and so we try to just make sure that we continue on with the conversations that we ask, the questions we go when we knock on doors and when we can sit in our open spaces, then we plan to do that with obviously with respect to covid and and the safety restrictions. So I hope that answered your question.

[00:29:12] Definitely. Yeah, yeah.

[00:29:17] Yeah. No, I mean, I think that was so well said, Tache. I mean I think I could maybe contribute a couple other ways. We've tried to build some of those bridges. I think one of the key things for us has been follow through that there have been plans. People have talked about ideas for a long time. It's really being able to deliver that, I think, for us started to rebuild that trust that we were serious, that we were going to follow up what we said with actual investment. And that meant not only into the places. Right. I think it also meant for us, the people. We tried things like giving residents many grants to lead projects, whatever they wanted to lead. Julia mentioned some of the community led programming. And I think for us, like investing in that social infrastructure and building the culture of how this park would be used was equally as important as the design and actually empowering people to, like, run the programming that you want to see and actually giving them some resources to do that, I think for us was really huge and changing the conversation about who this was for and and why, what the character and the culture of the space ended up being.

[00:30:24] Yeah. Julia, do you have any insights from the report that addressed these points?

[00:30:32] Just to really affirm, we found the same as when Alexian Tacher saying that in all seven of these projects addressing how to make the spaces inclusive was a key goal. And some of them are finding great new ways to do that. But but it is an ongoing and ongoing focus and something that I think just said, like it doesn't happen overnight. This needs ongoing effort and resources behind it. And it was that those ongoing conversations and engagement that you're talking about that did lead projects to be more resilient during during this pandemic and invite greater use from local residents. So I think just however, we can expand support of the local organizations and agencies to continue this engagement is is key.

[00:31:30] And I think one of the things that that I'm hearing is and something that was emphasized, the report Julia was talking about, community led throughout the lifecycle. And TOKIE pointed this out that it's not not just one time, you don't you don't engage one time. You know, this is about from design to governance, literally, of these public spaces, which is hard work to do. And Alexa, you talked about the many grant program, the piloting. I just really brilliant the work that that you all have done with that with the community engagement.

[00:32:04] So we we're going to pivot to the questions. There's a question around around moving forward. How how are you guys thinking about the recovery and in your face? And and so, look, there are billions and billions of dollars are going to be released for infrastructure projects, for public space and also for workforce, which I think is interesting as we think about our public spaces. So how can we leverage this time to build more inclusive, equitable public spaces? So I want to. Alexia, can you start?

[00:32:40] Sure. I am excited for the opportunity. I think as a lot of us have mentioned, people have really seen the value of public space in the pandemic and I think maybe have a new appreciation. What I always think about resources like that is for us to think outside the box a little bit. I think sometimes people get into a silo of, like I do parks and I need park funding or I do streets and I need this. But I think when you start to think of this idea of infrastructure and public space really as a whole kind of civic infrastructure that supports trust, that supports communities, some of it is even just being being flexible. And how you define your project. Right. I know for us in Detroit, we try to deliberately link like streets with small business support adjacent to a park that's walkable to a school, but really kind of thinking beyond like a specific type of public space and thinking more about the public realm as a bigger, inclusive, connected entity, maybe a way to use funds that might come from different federal agencies, et cetera, to actually push forward a more deliberate agenda around public space.

[00:33:55] You want to jump in and tell us a bit about how you're thinking about adaptive recovery and and potentially the large amount of dollars that are going to be pouring into cities.

[00:34:08] Yeah, you know, I, I, I think our efforts are more individualized and intentional when it comes to our activity. We have funds that are allotted now for things like beautification, street cleanup and planting in our food shares and stuff like that.

[00:34:34] And I think that right now for us, as we begin to open up more, that's where our more individualized concentration is.

[00:34:47] Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. And Julia, anything that you want to add in, because you have this really interesting perspective of like a global perspective of how cities across the country are thinking this through the recovery piece, that the massive amount of dollars that are that are coming in for recovery.

[00:35:05] What what are your thoughts?

[00:35:07] Yeah, just this social infrastructure piece that I mentioned, I think is so key and and just really the need to highlight the social component of all of this work, in addition to the physical investment our cities need, is it is what brings these spaces to life and actually allows them to meet the the needs that have been expressed by communities and the desires for the future, as well as just the maintenance to make sure that the quality of these spaces stays intact. And I think one thing I hope work like this can help elevate is the importance of not just engagement, but really understanding what is the lived experience of a certain community and communities like what are people what our daily routines like what? How are people moving around? Where are they spending time, what feels safe and and and actually give some trust that how you feel in a place and and how your your your acting there today is important.

[00:36:19] And those are things that we as designers or policymakers really need to to make sure we're understanding and elevating and using as we shape spaces and programs. It sounds really simple, right? But we know so often we in the planning world development world can can start a conversation or a project by thinking about the form or the engineering or the the esthetics of something. And as an afterthought, ask, oh, wait a second, who are we inviting in and what is the experience we're trying to create here? And



we want to invert that and make sure that we are first, starting with a focus on on the people in these places.

[00:37:09] Yeah, that's a great question. This is a discussion we've been having internally and lately we've heard Alberta talk about this. We we talk about community led. We talk about resident led. But how do we not fool ourselves into thinking that just some engagement, really, and we can kind of check that box. How do we really ensure that when we say community led, it really is community led? And so to your point to that, that's very easy said and done, Tosh and Aleksa. I mean, how do we hold ourselves accountable to that? And I guess the question is, can we really do that? Because in some ways I think the discussion we've had, it means we have to cede some power over to another great discussion that we've had in various different discussions around public spaces. But how do you all how do you all think about that part of the work?

[00:38:06] Let me be real honest. When you start talking about we're opening up the conversations to community community organizations outside of your community organization, you are going to have to have and I mean, no offense to anybody because there are little fires everywhere. And you need to know before going in the history of the community of which you serve, because if you don't. There's going to be a problem. OK? And I'm just being really honest with you, you know, our community leaders, they were there long before we got there. And and, you know, they deserve every bit of respect available because long before we put these surveys in order and built our brick and mortar buildings for us to have our administrative offices in our conversations, you know, we again and we talked about this before, you know, we have our community residents, our beautiful seniors who pulled all of these things together without being a registered community organization. You know, they did it at the grandmama's tables. And so when you go in and you are helping or you you have the intention of helping a community, you need to listen to what they're saying. You need to listen to what the residents are saying and what they're putting on the table. And then, you know, you're going to have to wear a couple of different hats. You're going to have to be the listener. You're going to have to be the therapist, the little firefighter out, you know, and the connector with the best intentions. Because if you are not authentic, when you go in to have the conversations with the much respected residents of the community, they know it. So, you know, if if you're going in, you better go in sincerely and know that the residents of the community, of the communities are not to be disrespected. You know, they may not have all of the terminology that we have. They may not know what the structure should be specifically, but trust me, they know how to pull it together. And it is our job to support those conversations. And I think if you go in with that frame of respect, I think you can be really, really successful in assisting the community efforts.

[00:40:32] Yeah, looks like you guys do that. Yeah, I mean, I would agree wholeheartedly with so many of those points that, yeah, like really being authentic and understanding those dynamics is key to really making sure that you're accountable. We were talking about power, which I think is really key. We've been talking about trust. And for me, they go both ways. If I want people to trust me, I have to trust them back. And that does involve sharing decision making in various ways. It doesn't happen overnight. I think when you're talking about community groups, institutions, long time residents, there is history with everyone. I think if you even if you go in well-intentioned, then you're like, yeah, we're going to share power and it's going to be like super fun. Like, you probably have a rocky road and that's OK. But when you're talking about local government, you're talking about all these other institutions, I would say my best advice is just to move slowly and build that trust both ways so that the worst thing you could do, I think, is like go to the community, be

really excited, be like we're going to share power. And then a board is like we're drawing the line. Right. Like you need to build that confidence on both sides as you go that I think it's critical. But move slow as opposed to like jump in too fast because there's a lot of little fires or minefields that I think are rooted in history that you have to work through. Great.

[00:42:02] Lily, I don't know if you there have been a couple of questions around the diversity of leadership and staff and city and how that doesn't always resonate or translate, excuse me, into racial equity in terms of policy, resources and community building. So what other steps can we take? And I think this kind of builds on this idea, like how do we start to not just listen but but build trust through actually taking action based on what people are with the feedback we're hearing from communities. So how do we ensure some of these steps to be really acted on as we're as we're listening and and also synthesizing a lot of what the community's been saying for decades.

[00:42:51] Anybody in? I mean, I think it it's sort of rooted in these same principles of like I know one of the things that we are really conscious of at the city is like we are always trying to do work with resources behind it, that we don't just want to go engage people and talk about things and have a great conversation and then never show up again. Right. Like, I think that's at the root of so much of that, the mistrust that exists that I guess for us it's it's, you know, being much more transparent with things like budget and transparency and trying. And sometimes it is saying, like the community might have this really cool idea. And you're like, well, right now at the city, like either that is in a jurisdiction that we have or we don't actually have funding for that right now, like having being more honest with people about the boundaries that you do have. Whatever institution you're working at isn't to tell the community it's a bad idea. But I think it's more about being really honest with expectations and figuring out, you know, maybe you can 100 percent do that idea. But are there parts of it that you can? Are there other resources or partners who maybe are a better fit? But, yeah, I think it's a lot about being really honest with people, about what you are able to do as an institution and what the expectation should be.

[00:44:17] I have an add to that.

[00:44:21] You know, I think another thing to think about as we enter and to enter with respect and understanding and an openness to understand the history of a place. Right. It's also about being able to, you know, not go in with a premeditated idea or a real prescription. Right. And I think sometimes we see, OK, great, we've got funding to do X, Y and Z in this place. And then there's a question of, well, the community doesn't seem to support this or nobody's coming to our meetings or they're not happy about it. And it's like, well, maybe that's because people have actually been asking for something else for 20 years and responded. And now they see there is funding and it's going to something else. So I think making sure there's room and space to understand how that might exist and make those connections and ideally be responsive to in that sense. And I think public spaces cannot solve all of our problems. But I think the beauty of them is that they are these platforms and there is actually a lot of opportunity for them to connect the dots and connect a lot of things that people are looking for, which is a good point.

[00:45:49] It's a super good point.

[00:45:52] And I love that you said that sometimes people have other ideas about where they want to see funding going from the door and in although I'm not a super big fan of like surveying and stuff like that and all that technical stuff, it does really come in handy

sometimes when you're in meetings with people, when you're in meetings with your residents.

[00:46:17] So Residents Association, when you're in meetings with the playground park people, you know, and the people that you love to talk to when the day to day you can take opportunities to pass these papers around and say, hey, what do you want to see? And it's not that it looks so formal and you don't love doing it, but when you have the opportunity to really ask the questions and even like pull out the paper and from one season to another season, it might look different depending on what the experiences have been throughout the year. So you want to you got to stay on top of it. And sometimes it is sometimes people will write down things that they can actually they don't feel comfortable coming out and saying. So you have to try every effort and try every angle to get the words out of the people that you care for so much in the communities. And so I'm not again, I'm not a big fan of survey, but it does come in handy so that when you do when these opportunities do come up, you can pretty much know and you can go back to your tools and refer to them and say, OK, here's here's what we're saying. This is the popular consensus. This is what people are trying to see. And let's address that first before we talk about a larger agenda of what we think needs to happen.

[00:47:45] It's just I mean, you make such a great point, because what you're talking about, again, is the life cycle of community led. And if a concept. Feedback loop, which with generates surveys or whatever, I mean, it's just constantly getting feedback from your community.

[00:48:01] It's hard work. You all we are at a time actually the time flew by. But this was an amazing conversation around public spaces, community led, work anchored and really good research from Gehl. And thank you to Tashia and Julia joining us in this conversation. And thanks to our audience for the really good questions. There were a few other questions around policing. How do you link public space work to as a platform to other community development work? And what I would say, check out the report, because there's a lot of really good sites in there and a lot of good insights from in particular from Tashia and Alexa. So with that, thanks again. And we will see you next month on Coast to Coast.

[00:48:57] Thank you. Thank you.