



URBAN BEGINNINGS

A NEWSLETTER ABOUT NAVIGATING URBAN PLANNING AND ITS IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES

VOLUME 2. SEASON 1. MAY/JUNE 2024 EDITION

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

The past few months have been incredibly eventful and inspiring for Urban Beginnings! We are beyond grateful for the opportunity to participate in conversations with our esteemed guests about urban planning and its impact on communities.

During Season 1, we covered a wide range of topics, including equity, food systems, advocacy, transportation and active transportation, storytelling, placekeeping, and history. A recurring theme has been the profound acknowledgment of the interdisciplinary nature of urban planning and its intersection with various other fields.

As we prepare for the return of Season 2, we're taking the next few weeks to refine our craft and reflect on maximizing our audience's listening and

TOTAL # OF ALL TIME LISTENS: 297
TOTAL # OF COUNTRIES /CITIES LISTENING: 6/15

viewing experience. We believe this short hiatus will be restorative while we focus on developing more intentional content to reach even more people interested in the field. Thank you to our fantastic community for being here! And as always, keep showing up, keep doing the work, keep being awesome!

draws attention to existing needs and gaps, emphasizing that while those with transportation insecurities or mobility concerns remain dependent on public transportation, challenges like safety and infrastructure inadequacies persist. While innovations like on-demand transit services show promise, they require enhanced affordability and effective marketing.

Enoc also discusses the complex logistics of transitioning to zero-emission vehicles by 2040, particularly in rural and mountainous areas, emphasizing the need for grants and subsidies to sustain and increase ridership. He advocates for a multifaceted approach to improving public transportation, including better marketing, enhanced infrastructure, and micro-mobility solutions. Shifting public perception to emphasize the benefits of not driving, such as reduced stress and environmental impact, is also crucial.

In conclusion, reliability, accessibility, strategic planning for stops, and integrating micro-

transit for the first and last miles are crucial to attracting riders. Effective use of grants can support necessary infrastructure

...THERE ARE THINGS THAT CAN BE DONE TO PERSUADE THE INDIVIDUAL TO FIND VALUE IN THAT TIME THAT THEY ARE NOT DRIVING. ALSO THE BENEFITS OF IT WHILE YOU'RE AT IT...YOU'RE HELPING REDUCING GHG EMISSIONS, VMT, AND SOME OF THAT ROAD NOISE...

-ENOC MENDOZA

improvements and vehicle maintenance, making public transportation a viable and attractive option that aligns with personal and community benefits.

If this conversation interests you and you want to learn more about transportation planning or what it's like to be a transportation planner, listen [HERE!](#)

You can also listen or watch via your preferred platform by clicking on the icons below.

HAVE QUESTIONS? FEEDBACK? TOPIC REQUESTS? SUBMIT A COMMENT [HERE](#)

LET'S MAKE TRANSPORTATION COOL AGAIN

In Episode 3, Enoc Mendoza, a Transportation Planner from Kern County, discusses his role and experiences in transportation planning. Enoc begins the conversation by delving into scheduling, fleet management, and administration, emphasizing zero-

emission vehicles and the financial aspects of public transportation, such as revenue, ridership, and funding. He reflects on how remote work post-COVID-19 has reduced travel demand, highlighting the need for adaptable transportation solutions. He also

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EPISODE GUIDE

[Episode 0. About Us](#)

[Episode 1.](#)

Community Food Systems and Participatory Planning with Ryan Thayer

[Episode 2.](#)

From Exhibit to Empowerment: A Journey Through City Oral History

[Episode 3.](#)

Let's Make Transportation Cool Again

[Episode 4.](#)

Pathways: From Private to Public Sector with Amy Nguyen

[Episode 5.](#)

Active Transportation and Tactical Urbanism with Isaac Gonzlez

ELEMENTS OF SAC

Elements of Sacramento is focused on connecting and highlighting BIPOC local artists, entrepreneurs, and small businesses through THEIR stories!

To listen, for more information, or for inquires, check out @elements_of_sac on Instagram. ...or click [here](#) to be directed to their IG page.

PATHWAYS: FROM PRIVATE TO PUBLIC SECTOR WITH AMY NGUYEN

In Episode 4., we have a candid conversation with Amy Nguyen, Junior Planner with YOLO County, about her experiences working in both the public and private sectors and the often unspoken trials and tribulations of being a planning professional.

A Sacramento native, Amy holds a degree in Urban Studies from California State, Northridge, with a minor in Sustainability. Amy's initial interest in urban planning was sparked by a trip to Los Angeles during her teens, which led her to pursue a degree in urban studies. After graduation, she gained valuable experience in land use planning and project management with national homebuilders, where she specialized in contract administration, project planning for affordable housing, and mixed-use development. However, the instability of the private sector and her desire for a more inclusive work environment prompted her to seek opportunities in the public sector. Now, with YOLO County, Amy focuses on environmental planning and sustainability, contributing meaningfully to community development.

For folks new to the field and eager to hear some real-world experience from a planner navigating the diverse planning landscape, this episode is for you! In this episode, Amy discusses the complexities of entering into planning as a recent graduate, her recent professional experiences that led her to public sector planning, and even her personal experiences, including unemployment and multiple job transitions. We believe there is much to glean from Amy's insight and persistence: Her journey underscores resilience and adaptability, advising aspiring planners to lead passionately and authentically.

Lastly, Amy also shares insights into her "Elements of Sacramento" passion project, highlighting local businesses and artisans through storytelling, emphasizing the importance of cultural heritage and community cohesion. To hear more and to join us in sending Amy off into her upcoming graduate school pursuits at the University of California, Davis, this Fall, check out Episode 4. [HERE!](#)

ACTIVE TRANSIT & TACTICAL URBANISM

Isaac Gonzalez is a passionate advocate for equitable transportation and community development. With extensive experience in various community initiatives, he has played a pivotal role in elevating Sacramento's diverse neighborhoods, including his long-term commitment to transforming the Tahoe Park Neighborhood Association, where he is the President, into an inclusive, welcoming community group. Other accolades include founding the Slow Down Sacramento campaign to promote safer driving and serving as the Vice Chair of the

ELEMENTS OF SAC IS MY WAY OF TRYING TO BRIDGE MY PASSION FOR PLANNING & COMMUNITY & FINDING A WAY TO FURTHER HIGHLIGHT LOCAL BUSINESSES, SMALL ENTREPRENEURS, ARTISANS & CONNECTING THEM THROUGH STORYTELLING... FINDING A WAY TO ELEVATE THEM THROUGH THEIR LENS, THROUGH THEIR STORY

-AMY NGUYEN

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ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION & TACTICAL URBANISM WITH ISAAC GONZALEZ CONTINUED...

city of Sacramento's Active Transportation Commission. Isaac's work emphasizes the importance of grassroots efforts and tactical urbanism in creating safer and more accessible urban spaces.

I'VE REALLY COME TO A PLACE WHERE I WANT RADICAL CHANGE, BUT I'M PRAGMATIC & I WANT TO BE KIND TO PEOPLE...I'M SAYING THE THING IN THE ROOM THAT PEOPLE THINK, BUT DON'T SAY. THESE ARE THE TYPES OF TRUTHS WE NEED TO START ACKNOWLEDGING. ...WE NEED TO SAY THESE THINGS & HAVE AN HONEST CONVERSATION, & I THINK WHEN WE DO, AND WE EXPOSE OUR VULNERABILITY & OUR INTENTIONS, WE CAN AT LEAST WORK WITHIN OUR MEANS

-ISAAC GONZALEZ

For those interested in transportation-adjacent opportunities, this episode explores urban transportation, focusing on active transportation, tactical urbanism, and community initiatives. As a long-time advocate for equitable cycling infrastructure, Isaac discusses his efforts to incorporate innovative urban design approaches into city planning. This dialogue includes insights on infrastructure improvements, advocating for safer streets, the challenges of implementing protected bike lanes, the need for state legislation to support urban infrastructure improvements, and, more generally, engaging with city policies. We also discuss the significance of community involvement, grassroots campaigns, and the potential for positive change through advocacy and collaboration.

Lastly, Isaac highlights the effectiveness of tactical urbanism as a quick, cost-effective strategy for enhancing road safety and the importance of prioritizing transportation resources in underserved communities.

Listen [HERE!](#) for a comprehensive discussion on community activism's impact and collaboration's power in shaping urban development.

RESOURCES

Video Resources:

[What is Tactical Urbanism](#)

[The Place Man \(2024\)](#)

Reading Resources:

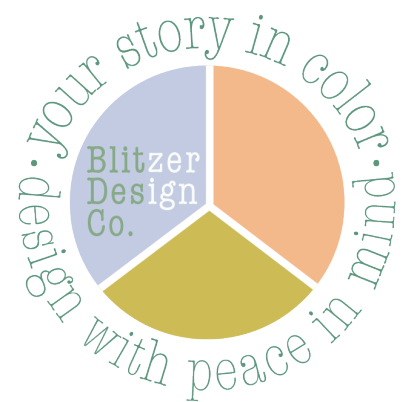
[How to Turn a Place Around: A Placemaking Handbook](#)

Street Fight: Handbook for an Urban Revolution by Janette Sadik-Khan & Seth Solomonow

Referenced Resources:

[Slow Down Sacramento](#)

SPONSORS



ENOC MENDOZA, TRANSPORTATION PLANNER, KERN COUNTY



AMY NGUYEN, JUNIOR PLANNER, YOLO COUNTY



ISAAC GONZALEZ, ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER, CITY OF SACRAMENTO



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