## **Planning Podcasts**

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#### **PODCAST SUMMARIES**

Kali Holahan RPP. MCIP Communications Committee Chair

## Steffi Sunny

Communications Committee Member

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## City Space Podcast: How an **Indigenous-led Development is** Forcing Vancouver to Face Tough **Ouestions on Reconciliation**

Run time: 28 minutes Host: Irene Galea

Guest: Tim Coldwell, Ginger Gosnell-Meyers, Gordon Price, Sarah Kirby-Young

#### **Podcast link**

https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/ article-city-space-podcast/

### **Podcast Summary**

Across Canada, more and more First Nations are turning to real estate and housing development as money makers, shaping the future of Canadian cities. This is especially visible in Vancouver with projects like Senákw, a development by the Squamish Nation, set to become one of Canada's densest neighbourhoods. It is a project that carries a lot of promise but also comes with its share of controversy. This episode looks at

how developments like Seňákw are forcing municipalities across the country to face some tough questions, including how to square Indigenous sovereignty with city planning and what reconciliation looks like at the local level.

## Why Planners Should Listen

What does reconciliation look like at the local level and who gets to decide? These are some of the tough questions that host Irene Galea is looking to answer. This episode dives into the complexities of reconciliation through the lens of the Senákw development, a landmark urban reserve project led by the Squamish Nation.

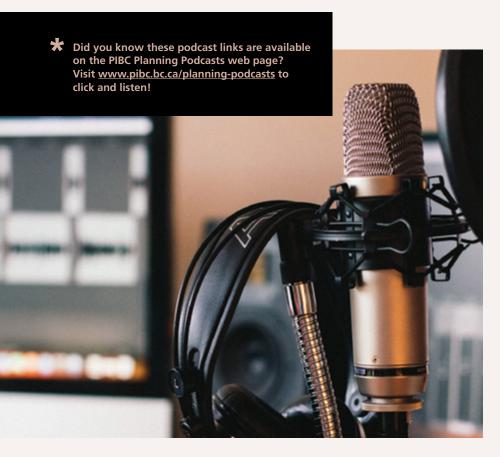
In 2003, the Squamish Nation regained 10.5 acres of land, now the site of the Seńákw development. Seňákw is a housing initiative comprised of 11 towers, 6,000 rental units, including 1,200 affordable homes, with 250 reserved for Squamish members.

The podcast highlights tensions between Indigenous self-determination and local urban concerns like those from the Kits Point Residents Association. The Kits Point Residents Association didn't oppose the development outright, but raised concerns about its scale, density, and lack of consultation. Their lawsuit challenging the city's service agreement with the Squamish Nation was ultimately dismissed.

Key voices in the episode offer powerful reflections:

- Gosnell-Meyers emphasizes the need for non-Indigenous residents to understand their role in supporting reconciliation: "It's not the residents' fault that we live in a society where consultation of Indigenous people has largely been absent. But it is our responsibility to understand why we need to support First Nations reconciliation and economic self-determination where possible."
- Coldwell underscores the importance of Indigenous autonomy: "The ability for the nation to decide and have autonomy and authority over how they use their lands... is a big part of reconciliation."
- Gosnell-Meyers also challenges fears around Indigenous empowerment: "There is this unfounded fear that the more we learn about Indigenous history... the more we will have to give up. And that's not the reality that reconciliation provides... we'll be building a better society that doesn't alienate and marginalize populations."

The episode makes clear that urban reserves like Seňákw operate outside municipal control, raising questions about governance, planning, and shared responsibility. It also invites listeners to reframe reconciliation not as a loss, but as a collective gain for communities, ecosystems, and future generations. This is a great listen!



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## **Critical Conversations in Transportation Planning:** Jill Locantore

Run time: 26 minutes

Hosts: Divya Gandhi and Em Hall

Guests: Jill Locantore, Executive Director of the Denver Streets Partnership (DSP)

#### Podcast link

https://planning.org/podcast/criticalconversations-in-transportationplanning-jill-locantore/

## **Podcast summary**

This episode of the Critical Conversation in Transportation Planning series (produced by the American Planning Association's Transportation Planning Division) dives deep into the political, cultural, and social challenges inherent in transforming corridors from car-centric to bike and pedestrianfriendly. From traffic calming and street design to Denver's bold efforts to prioritize buses and pedestrian safety, Jill unpacks how a truly safe city starts with valuing people over cars.

Denver Streets Partnership (DSP) advocates for and implements policies that promote a transit-centered approach to improving traffic safety. It has been instrumental in transforming Colfax Avenue, "the longest, wickedest street in America", into a major arterial that supports the city's ambitious Vision Zero goal.

## Why Planners Should Listen

This is a valuable episode for anyone interested in practical strategies for shifting travel behavior and making transit a viable option within their communities.

Jill Locantore shares her journey from public sector planning to advocacy and her experiences with the Denver Streets Partnership. DSP is a coalition of communitybased groups working to reduce car dependence, prioritize walking, biking, and transit, and reimagine streets as public spaces rather than just travel corridors. While public sector planners can influence internal policies, they are ultimately constrained by elected officials. Locantore's move to advocacy was motivated by a desire to push

directly for policy change and hold decisionmakers accountable.

A key topic was the importance of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) as both a transit improvement and a safety strategy. BRT is a cornerstone of Denver's Vision Zero efforts to improve safety and mobility. Locantore emphasizes the importance of dedicated bus lanes and frequent, reliable service, noting that transit becomes attractive only when it competes with driving in terms of convenience and speed. She also emphasizes that equitable investment in service frequency, rider amenities, and safety is essential, not only to encourage choice riders but also to respect the dignity of those who rely on transit.

This interview highlights the need to align policy, investment, and design with human dignity and equity. Planners and planning students can take away insights on how resource allocation, advocacy, and attention to user experience directly affect mobility choices and equity outcomes.

Learn more about the DSP at https://denverstreetspartnership.org/

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