

Planning Podcasts

The podcasts in this issue tackle the "pavement paradise". Take a listen to how planners can transform car-dependent suburbs into healthy, walkable places and how a single parking policy decision can reshape a city (and how people live in it) with unintended consequences.

Got a podcast about planning you want to share? Contact us with your podcast summary at editor@pibc.bc.ca

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Strong Towns Podcast – Walkable City Design is Critical for Economic Health

Run time 1:24:00

Podcast summary by Leah Karlberg
Candidate Member

Host: Charles Marohn
Guest: Tristan Cleveland, PhD, MCIP
Urban Planner at Happy Cities

Podcast link*

<https://podcast.strongtowns.org/e/walkable-city-design-is-critical-for-economic-health/>

Podcast Summary

After World War II, the U.S. embarked on an experiment in how we build cities. Instead of creating places scaled to people who walked, we built suburbs that focused on moving cars quickly and efficiently. Many cities in North America are looking to become walkable again, but it's not easy. Time and time again, change makers are hit by bureaucracy and complicated logistics.

Author and urban planner, Tristan Cleveland, discusses his recently published PhD thesis, which identifies impactful strategies to transform car-dependent suburbs into healthy, walkable places in Canada and the United States.

Why Planners Should Listen

Urban planners face a new challenge in low-density suburbs. If they zone an area for compact, mixed-use development, often nothing changes. The economic logic of car-dependent areas encourages low-cost, car-oriented strip malls and big box stores, and it can be difficult to shift these incentives. Cleveland lays out a practical program for overcoming these challenges to kickstart a new kind of healthier, more people-friendly growth. The conversation also touches on unexpected topics affecting communities today.

99% Invisible, Episode 537 – Paved Paradise

Run time 27:00

Podcast summary by Kali Holahan RPP, MCIP
Communications Committee Chair

Hosts: Roman Mars, creator of 99% Invisible Podcast

Guest: Henry Grabar, author of Paved Paradise: How Parking Explains the World

Podcast link*

<https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/paved-paradise/>

Podcast Summary

Design is everywhere in our lives, perhaps most importantly in the places where we've just stopped noticing. 99% Invisible Podcasts are a weekly exploration of the process and power of design and architecture.

LA might be the most extreme parking city on the planet. Parking regulations have made it nearly impossible to build new affordable housing or to renovate old buildings. Parking has a massive impact on how the city looks. LA is chock-full of commercial strip malls, where buildings sit alone and isolated in a sea of asphalt. All of this is the result of one policy decision that has reshaped American cities for the last eighty years.

Henry Grabar tells a mesmerizing story about the strange and wonderful super-organism that is the modern American city. In a beguiling and often absurdly hilarious mix of history, politics, and reportage, Grabar brilliantly surveys the pain points of the nation's parking crisis, from Los Angeles to Disney World to New York, stopping at every major American city in between.

Why Planners Should Listen

Planners are used to discussions about parking. For every development application, parking and traffic seems to be a top concern. But before you sigh and say, "another parking discussion emphasizing buses and bikes – I've already heard it," 99% Invisible challenges this and achieves an engaging conversation that lays out how policy decisions made now may have unintended consequences for decades to come. For anyone struggling with parking regulations and how to rationalize reducing them, I strongly recommend checking this podcast out.



* Podcast links are available on the PIBC Planning Podcasts web page at www.pibc.bc.ca/planning-podcasts