

Curb Enthusiasm Episode 11 Transcript

00;00;02;20 - 00;00;05;17

Emily Weidenhof

Welcome to Curb Enthusiasm. I'm Emily Weidenhof.

00;00;05;19 - 00;00;07;04

Rochelle Brahalla

I'm Rochelle Brahalla

00;00;07;06 - 00;00;14;27

Emily Weidenhof

On this episode, we chat with Diana Alarcon, director of the Nashville Department of Transportation and Multimodal Infrastructure.

00;00;14;29 - 00;00;26;19

Rochelle Brahalla

Dianna joins us today with a wealth of experience in the public sector. Before her role as director of Nashville D.O.T., she served as the Director of Transportation and Mobility for the City of Tucson, as well as the City of Fort Lauderdale.

00;00;26;21 - 00;00;32;04

Emily Weidenhof

Hi, Dianna. Welcome. We are so excited to get a chance to speak with you today.

00;00;32;11 - 00;00;36;10

Diana Alarcon

Thank you. I'm really excited to have a chance to visit with you ladies today.

00;00;36;13 - 00;00;49;05

Emily Weidenhof

Great. We really want to dive right in and talk about a really fascinating initiative coming out of your shop in Nashville. What is the Choose How You Move initiative?

00;00;49;08 - 00;01;20;02

Diana Alarcon

Oh, well, it was actually a referendum we took out to our community. And, two thirds of our community said, yes, we want to improve transit and infrastructure. So choose how you move. Is actually the mayor. I have to give him kudos for this because he is actually who led it. And what we looked at is what do we need in order to build a more reliable, convenient transportation system for all of Nashvillians and Davidson County residents and businesses and visitors as well?

00;01;20;05 - 00;01;37;05

Diana Alarcon

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And so it's a 30 year referendum generating and a half penny sales tax for 30 years. That equates to roughly about \$3.1 billion over 30 years. But we have 15 years to build it. That's what the mayor's asked us to do. So we are off and running already.

00;01;37;08 - 00;01;40;14

Rochelle Brahall

Good for you. That's really, really exciting. And congratulations again.

00;01;40;15 - 00;01;41;21

Diana Alarcon

Thank you.

00;01;41;23 - 00;01;52;24

Rochelle Brahall

I have friends in Tennessee who are really excited. Well, I can talk about it a little bit more later, but I used to live in Memphis. Friends that are still living in Memphis are really excited about the precedent that this is setting for the state of Tennessee.

00;01;52;25 - 00;01;56;24

Rochelle Brahall

So on behalf of everyone I know in Memphis, congratulations.

00;01;57;00 - 00;01;58;12

Diana Alarcon

Thank you.

00;01;58;15 - 00;02;01;04

Diana Alarcon

They're doing some impressive things in Memphis, too.

00;02;01;05 - 00;02;05;11

Rochelle Brahall

So they are. They are. They get their flowers, too.

00;02;05;14 - 00;02;06;24

Diana Alarcon

Yes. They should.

00;02;06;27 - 00;02;18;29

Rochelle Brahall

You spoke a little bit about the need, right, for this referendum. Can you say a little bit more about that? And, what you kind of what you were hearing from communities about what was what was necessary for this plan, what needed to be included.

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00;02;19;02 - 00;02;41;02

Diana Alarcon

Nashville is one of the fastest growing cities, in the country, right now, and that's kind of been put out there. And everybody, I think, is what, 100 people a day are moving into Nashville. And, we feel it. We get about 22 million people that come and visit us on an annual basis as well. So that's part of that million that come into our downtown on a regular basis.

00;02;41;04 - 00;03;10;03

Diana Alarcon

They're anticipating that growth to continue like this year. We're on spot for being over 24 million new visitors coming to us and visiting with us. So, it is just, the need of figuring out how to move folks is really important. Our airport, we don't have a direct line from the airport to downtown, and we know that folks that are flying in that 22 million that I shared, 24 million they're anticipating this year.

00;03;10;05 - 00;03;27;14

Diana Alarcon

Those folks we believe about 60 to 65% of them are actually heading into our downtown core, and the rest are going to other areas in the surrounding area. So we want to be able to make sure we can get them safely to those areas as well. The service, you know, we based Choose How You Move on four S's.

00;03;27;14 - 00;03;48;09

Diana Alarcon

So it was actually service. So improving our service convenience and reliability. It was about signal. So that if you're in the bus we will be able to do you know queue jumping our transit only lanes. But also that's going to help with moving traffic as well safely. We are a Vision Zero city. So we're really focused in on safety.

00;03;48;09 - 00;04;07;05

Diana Alarcon

And one of the issues in the choose how you move is safety. So it's going to allow us to really focus more on our safety improvements that we want to do for all modes. And then the last one was - so service, signals, sidewalks. That was our last one. So that's a big challenge for us here is to build sidewalks.

00;04;07;05 - 00;04;30;05

Diana Alarcon

So we're building an 82 miles worth of sidewalks. So that's like going from here about down to there's this lovely little city that's 82 miles away. And they have like, all these tree house cottages, and it's up in the mountains and it's beautiful and creeks and stuff. And so that's the point that everybody use because everybody goes there.

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00;04;30;05 - 00;04;55;13

Diana Alarcon

Monteagle's the name, everybody goes there in the fall, you know, and it's kind of they're like, You know, out of all the traffic congestion and combustion and all of that, that happens. So it was easy for people to relate to that. So 82 miles is sidewalks. We're going to improve services on every level. We're looking at, you know, nine corridors that we're focusing in on trying to build what we're calling all access corridors.

00;04;55;19 - 00;05;11;00

Diana Alarcon

So focusing on transit only lanes and BRT, sidewalk build outs, as well as and creating safe, bicycle lanes on those corridors as well. So, we are working through all of that and super excited about it.

00;05;11;02 - 00;05;16;09

Emily Weidenhof

And can I, can I ask you're looking at the, the larger metropolitan area?

00;05;16;09 - 00;05;45;25

Diana Alarcon

Yes. It will include all of Davidson County, which is roughly. So, Nashville has about, 758,000 people that live in Nashville, Davidson counties at roughly 1.1, almost 1.2. And our growth continues to expedite. We get in about an extra million people on a daily basis. That does business and throughout Davidson County in Nashville.

00;05;45;27 - 00;06;14;25

Diana Alarcon

So we are, working very trying to figure out how can we move some folks better. So, working with our surrounding counties is really important with us. Our MTA, our Wego is what we call them, which is our transit agency also runs the regional transportation authority as well. So it was really good that we were able to include some of those regional connections to our neighboring county, so that we're looking at an even bigger picture than just Davidson.

00;06;14;28 - 00;06;30;24

Diana Alarcon

And the way we did that is we said to our community, hey, we'll fund up to the county line, they'll fund it the rest of the way. And so that was kind of we worked with them to understand what that would look like and feel like so that we have these connections happening, going back and forth both ways.

00;06;31;01 - 00;06;38;05

Emily Weidenhof

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Fantastic. I love how so much of the way you talk about this is inclusive. There's there's room for everyone

00;06;38;05 - 00;06;38;23

Diana Alarcon

Everyone

00;06;38;23 - 00;06;55;01

Emily Weidenhof

In this initiative, which I think is really smart and strategic. Could you talk a little bit about the strategies for building buy in, and did you face opposition and, and how did the team approach that opposition?

00;06;55;01 - 00;07;14;14

Diana Alarcon

So yes, we did. We did have some opposition. As a matter of fact, we actually got sued after the, election was done. And we want so we had to go through the court process and the court said, no, they're following the rules. You know, the state legislation had actually passed what they call the Improve act.

00;07;14;16 - 00;07;35;24

Diana Alarcon

Back in, 2018. So we had a platform in which to follow, which made it simple when we started building it together. So it had to be about transportation and transit. So we couldn't like, go and build, you know, a house or a housing. We couldn't do that with this. So.

00;07;35;26 - 00;08;01;09

Diana Alarcon

But we built into the plan the opportunity to partner, do public private partnership. So we do have in this plan actually to build some parking share rights, where people can park on the edge and then bring transit in. And on those parking share rides, there's going to be the opportunity to actually partner with someone. So maybe we partner with someone where we'll build the park or buy the land and build the park parking side, and then they can come in and build the housing.

00;08;01;09 - 00;08;19;10

Diana Alarcon

And so that kind of helps us with some of our housing initiatives that we have, because like most cities, everybody doesn't have enough, you know, housing available for those folks that are, you know, I mean, we have a lot of folks that are in the entertainment district here. I mean, we are, you know, we got a music city road.

00;08;19;10 - 00;08;37;21

Diana Alarcon

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And when you're a young individual and you're out trying to make a name for yourself, you're making the small bucks. You're not making the big bucks that you see with the with the country stars out there. And so trying to provide that type of housing is really important to us so that we can continue to help with that business.

00;08;37;21 - 00;08;57;27

Diana Alarcon

And that area of the industry growing and thriving. So we want to make sure we're supporting that. And then of course, downtown, we are known to have what we call Honky Tonk Row, which is and a row and row of, places you can come and listen to live music. Every single one of them have bands, and some of them have three bands within their establishment.

00;08;58;02 - 00;09;16;16

Diana Alarcon

So it'll hit everyone. It has all kind of music, so not all country. We have all kinds of music, so we want to continue to support that. And those folks are not they can't afford our our medium average of a house right now is above 400. And realistically those folks need to pay around 300 or less for a home.

00;09;16;16 - 00;09;34;13

Diana Alarcon

So we're working really hard to figure out how to build in that type of housing, where it's available at their market rate, not necessarily at what the public, the private sector wants the market rate to be at. So that's going to give us some opportunities as well. So we built that kind of element into the choose how you move.

00;09;34;13 - 00;09;53;08

Diana Alarcon

And I just think that that was just really smart because that's also going to allow us to really get those transit riders and also make sure we're servicing them so that they can get to that place employment really easily as well. So we're looking forward to building all that out and being part of that growth here in Nashville.

00;09;53;11 - 00;10;13;00

Diana Alarcon

But that's that's how we did it. It's all over the place. We used a lot of our Vision Zero because, remember, safety was part of it. So unfortunately on High Injury Network. And I think most cities on this is in an area where we have the most disadvantaged, vulnerable people living. And so that was taken into place as part of this referendum.

00;10;13;06 - 00;10;35;03

Diana Alarcon

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So when we're making the safety improvements, we're building into that as part of our Vision Zero. So it is inclusive of everybody and you know, how we can move and make that a fun choice and not one where it's it's your only choice. We wanted to make sure we're building out the safe bikeway. So if I want to bike that day, I feel comfortable getting on my bike and riding.

00;10;35;05 - 00;10;48;28

Diana Alarcon

If I want to take the bus, I can take the bus. If I want to use Uber and Lyft, I can still use Uber and Lyft or Taxi for that matter, you know? I can walk to work if I want to or I can get in my car. But we are trying to encourage people to have more than one person in the car.

00;10;48;28 - 00;10;51;26

Diana Alarcon

We are trying to reduce single occupied vehicles.

00;10;51;29 - 00;10;53;18

Rochelle Brahall

That's so great.

00;10;53;18 - 00;10;54;03

Diana Alarcon

Thank you.

00;10;54;05 - 00;11;13;08

Rochelle Brahall

I lived in Memphis for a little over three years. I actually moved there without a car. I grew up in, in upstate New York, in Ithaca, which is, has it this really great rural regional transit system called the Tkat Tompkins County Area Transit. So I grew up thinking, you know, Ithaca, New York is 30,000 people.

00;11;13;08 - 00;11;37;11

Rochelle Brahall

It serves my tiny town of 5000 and upstate New York, moving to Memphis, which is the city of, you know, million metropolitan. I thought that city must have a fantastic transit system. And then, you know, moved and realized that it's actually really quite difficult to fund transit and in cities, and that the, the transit system in my hometown was funded very heavily and generously by universities.

00;11;37;14 - 00;11;57;15

Rochelle Brahall

And so I learned that pretty quickly. So as you're talking about these young musicians up and coming, I'm thinking about myself in that same position, living in a city, you know, just three miles to Earth, sorry, three hours down I-40. Yeah. I'm thinking about, you know, how

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difficult it was to move as a to move around without a car, as an AmeriCorps Vista volunteer.

00;11;57;18 - 00;12;15;08

Rochelle Brahalla

So it seems really, really exciting that, you know, you're building out these complete streets, these all access corridors that give folks options for how to move. Another tangent is when I really decided I was going to be a cyclist in Memphis, even after I had a car in Memphis, which is a whole other thing. Another, another like awakening.

00;12;15;10 - 00;12;34;25

Rochelle Brahalla

But yeah. So I'm, I'm curious, as a lead into the next question, I'm curious kind of which projects are most excited about which ones do you think will have the biggest impact, you know, particularly for, communities that you mentioned that are often, you know, overburdened by safety concerns, these communities that are often disadvantaged.

00;12;34;27 - 00;12;58;26

Diana Alarcon

So just a little bit about the referendum, it did get passed in November, but we did not start collecting funds until February. So the funds actually came available in April. So we're pretty fresh into this. You know, we're just three months into it. So it's so funny is because people's like spent over six months where having you gotten something done and it's like, do you realize that how much longer?

00;12;58;26 - 00;13;17;10

Diana Alarcon

I mean, I'm used to taking 8 to 10 years to build a project from the beginning, from concept to actually like cutting the ribbon and going, "woohoo" we did it, you know? And now here I'm looking at doing them in about four years. And so it's not that we're not doing anything. We are starting a lot of the conversations.

00;13;17;10 - 00;13;38;00

Diana Alarcon

And I think that's the fun part is we're starting those conversations. But that doesn't mean people don't want to see stuff done. So some of the stuff we have been able to do, for example, in our downtown core, we did a study called Connect Downtown, which actually feeds directly into the referendum that it was moved over into the referendum.

00;13;38;03 - 00;13;57;12

Diana Alarcon

It looked at many different things. Connect downtown was done because it was taking our bus over 13 minutes to go. One block, one block, 30 minutes. Wow. Yeah. So, obviously, we

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were running into a lot of problems where they had to put extra busses out, and then they would be bunching and and it was never on time.

00;13;57;12 - 00;14;20;20

Diana Alarcon

It was just one disaster after another. So we're really focused in on creating a better way for the bus to move in the downtown core. So it had I, it had, connect downtown. I had identified an opportunity to do a, transit only or a BRT, which connected to our East Bank, which is really been in an industrial piece of land that we recently rezone to allow it to develop.

00;14;20;20 - 00;14;42;15

Diana Alarcon

It's also where our, Tennessee Titans are at, and they're building a new stadium. So a lot of momentum going on over there. So how do we connect that and then connect with the other routes that we have. So I think that's what people are feeling right now is that excitement and that momentum. But in downtown from Connect Downtown we actually know we need to do something to better protect the pedestrians.

00;14;42;15 - 00;15;00;10

Diana Alarcon

Given how many folks are visiting us on a regular basis, most of them are on their feet, some of them on their on a scooter. And I, I don't mind the scooters, except for when someone is a little bit intoxicated and gets on them. That makes me nervous. Because we do want everyone to have fun, but we want them to be safe.

00;15;00;12 - 00;15;37;08

Diana Alarcon

But, we actually have gone in and done an entire new signal program and some of the dollars that we were able to get through our local MPO, as well as what we had in our, in our capital spending plan, has allowed us to advance what is also in connect downtown. I mean, in, choose how you move, where we put in a ton of, like, every intersection has a leading pedestrian interval now, and we set the signal timing so the cars can platoon together and move through and get out at peak time much more efficiently, which also is working for our bus.

00;15;37;15 - 00;15;55;29

Diana Alarcon

And right now we're actually working on a preemption for the bus. So that again, at peak time they're going to get priority over everything so we can get them out. And I'm looking forward to the day we test that. And we say we got them through downtown in in three minutes and not one block in 13 minutes.

00;15;56;02 - 00;16;16;13

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Diana Alarcon

Maybe I'm overexaggerating a little bit, but that's my goal, you know? But we're seeing some great outcome in that. And surprisingly, people are really excited because pedestrian and bicyclist feel safer and they can move easier and better. But also cars are moving. So we're having some really good wins that are going to feed into choose how you move.

00;16;16;13 - 00;16;22;22

Diana Alarcon

So this is just an example of what we plan on doing throughout the whole county to improve how people are moving.

00;16;22;24 - 00;16;52;18

Emily Weidenhof

Hey listeners, we hope you're enjoying this episode of our podcast. For those of you who are as enthusiastic about transportation and planning as we are, we'd like to hear from you. You can submit topics and questions that you'd like us to cover at NYC gov forward slash curb enthusiasm, and now back to our conversation. It's really fantastic. You also have a great map and website where people can go and learn about the initiative and see actual projects.

00;16;52;20 - 00;17;24;16

Emily Weidenhof

And get information about their neighborhood and where they live. You know, we talk a lot about how sometimes the data doesn't necessarily match the feelings or the emotions, of a space. So how are you thinking about communicating the wins and the benefits? Using both some of that great energy you're talking about, you're hearing from people, but also using using data and keeping in touch and making sure people know what these dollars are doing for them.

00;17;24;16 - 00;17;47;01

Diana Alarcon

So, you know, right now we are working, we have an interactive map on our website at nashville.gov backslash transit. And we're going to work on keeping that an interactive map. So as we move into projects, it will, it will be up there along with the data. Now we've also have put together what we're calling a citizen advisory board.

00;17;47;03 - 00;18;09;17

Diana Alarcon

And so that's made up of citizens throughout Davidson County. And as well as some regional partners. And the state is sitting at the table with us to talk about some of these projects. So also allowing our community to stay at the table and stay engaged and active and engaged, activated and helping us make the right choices for what we're doing.

00;18;09;20 - 00;18;35;15

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Diana Alarcon

But, that will also tie into an overarching communication plan, which will tie back into that interactive map. And so data is what I use pretty much for everything. And of course, you know, vision Zero is a ton of data. And you know, where you're pulling all sorts of information, not just about the safety, but also the aspects of the land use as well as, the demographics in that area.

00;18;35;15 - 00;18;57;02

Diana Alarcon

So you understand the challenges that are happening. And so that information is constantly being brought into the conversation as well. And then we share that out as in our Vision Zero. So we do an annual report and our Vision Zero actually getting ready to release our second year of Vision Zero. We are going in to our third year of Vision Zero.

00;18;57;05 - 00;19;16;01

Diana Alarcon

And we're pretty excited because we're are seeing some positive things coming out of Vision Zero. We're seeing a reduction in number, deaths that occur, but we've also seen a great decline in the number of serious injuries that are occurring. So we just want to keep sharing that data and keep telling people. And and you know, it's a culture change.

00;19;16;01 - 00;19;23;21

Diana Alarcon

This is all even the even choose how you move. It's a culture change. We're moving people out of one way of thinking to a whole nother way of thinking.

00;19;23;28 - 00;19;39;04

Rochelle Brahall

That's so interesting. Yeah. Reminds me how we, I sit on the transit development team, and so we think a lot about how to message our projects. And sometimes the biggest wins for our projects are, you know, not only by speed improvements, but some of the more tangible ones. It also include safety.

00;19;39;05 - 00;19;39;17

Diana Alarcon

Yeah!

00;19;39;17 - 00;19;53;16

Rochelle Brahall

How these these infrastructure priority street infrastructure projects actually just help, calm traffic, provide, you know, dedicated lanes for both cyclists and and transit just help with the predictability of a street.

00;19;53;18 - 00;20;01;19

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Rochelle Brahall

That's very interesting. And then I also read on the website that, that the referendum includes, you know, major service. And I guess you said that in your four S's.

00;20;01;21 - 00;20;20;17

Rochelle Brahall

Yes. And it also includes major, major service improvements. And I think the work that we do at DOT with, creating dedicated bus lanes and transit supportive infrastructure on the street, that work is so, powerful when it's combined with service improvements and when we're able to do that, which is so exciting that you can.

00;20;20;19 - 00;20;21;17

Diana Alarcon

Yes!

00;20;21;17 - 00;20;22;07

Rochelle Brahall

Do the two together.

00;20;22;07 - 00;20;45;13

Diana Alarcon

Here's another really great thing about that. Our regional, not our regional, excuse me, our transit operator, which is we-go they are actually going to start expanding some of that bus service in November. So we have a fleet of busses that are going to be and that are going to allow us to kind of expand that service, offer more reliable and convenient, and also to upgrade our crosstown service as well.

00;20;45;13 - 00;21;13;01

Diana Alarcon

So super excited about that. But I think a lot of that's going to happen later on down, next year, because that's when a lot of our fleet is coming in. So we had purchased them before. Choose how you move because it was just time. But now we're going to kind of I think they're going to stretch out some of the other ones till the new ones come in next year, that we're able to kind of push out some of that new service and have it be very, tangible for our community to feel.

00;21;13;01 - 00;21;15;17

Diana Alarcon

And I cannot wait. I'm super excited.

00;21;15;19 - 00;21;16;21

Rochelle Brahall

Yeah.

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00;21;16;23 - 00;21;18;17

Diana Alarcon

I'm just ready for it.

00;21;18;19 - 00;21;19;12

Rochelle Brahall

That's so great.

00;21;19;12 - 00;21;21;16

Diana Alarcon

Yes, it is great.

00;21;21;18 - 00;21;33;07

Rochelle Brahall

So switching gears a little bit. Yeah, something a little bit more lighthearted. You spoke about riding transit in Chicago, but this can go for any city where you ride transit. What is your biggest breach of public transit etiquette?

00;21;33;10 - 00;21;42;05

Diana Alarcon

My biggest breach of public etiquette. Okay. It actually happened in Nashville a few weeks ago.

00;21;42;26 - 00;21;44;02

Rochelle Brahall

Okay.

00;21;44;04 - 00;21;51;23

Diana Alarcon

And, I was, on the bus, so we got a litter campaign going on right now.

00;21;51;25 - 00;21;52;03

Rochelle Brahall

Yeah.

00;21;52;05 - 00;22;04;08

Diana Alarcon

All right. And I had taken the bus and had gotten off, and I was waiting for the bus to go, and I was waiting for the the light to change so I can cross the street. And I watched a gentleman throw some litter out of it.

00;22;04;08 - 00;22;14;29

Diana Alarcon

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So I don't know if this is transit related, except for taking the bus that day to work. And I actually went over and picked up the trash and handed it back to him, said, I think you dropped this. And then he had some very nice words for me.

00;22;15;01 - 00;22;34;10

Rochelle Brahall

Mine is like, really just says a lot more about my personality than it is about like transit etiquette, which is that if I see someone I know in the morning, I can't speak with them. Like physically, I'm like, I can't do small talk for 45 minutes. So I tell a lot of people upfront like, hi, it's really good to see you, but I need this, this 45 minutes to like, wake up.

00;22;34;12 - 00;22;41;04

Rochelle Brahall

But other people's etiquette has been like manspreading and yeah, kind of the classic littering on the subway. So yeah.

00;22;41;05 - 00;22;49;00

Diana Alarcon

No, I don't do that. But I will tell you when you litter, but in a nice way, like, oh, I think you dropped this. I'm so sorry.

00;22;49;03 - 00;22;50;09

Emily Weidenhof

00;22;50;11 - 00;23;09;23

Diana Alarcon

So that I do, do, quite often, I was riding a bike, with the council member with one of our council members here. We were out biking through his district, and, I'm in the middle. I always when I bike, I always get, like, in the middle of the street. And it drives my husband crazy, too, because he he he's nervous and he'll get on the sidewalk.

00;23;09;24 - 00;23;26;29

Diana Alarcon

I'm like, you're not supposed to be on the sidewalk. I'm like, "when you're with me, you have to stay with me, follow me!" And, I get the street and I had this guy who was mad at me for being in the middle of the street, and he went around me and he threw garbage at me.

00;23;27;01 - 00;23;27;20

Rochelle Brahall

Oh, wow.

00;23;27;23 - 00;23;44;26

Diana Alarcon

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And so I stopped and picked it up, and so did the council member. He stopped and helped me because he saw it happen. And then we both went biking really fast to get up to the car because we were going to throw it in the window. But he took off before we got there. That would have been my worst etiquette, because I was just going to throw it back in the window.

00;23;44;26 - 00;24;02;00

Diana Alarcon

I was so mad at him., He saw it and we but we didn't catch up with the car. I think they saw us coming. These two short people just pedaling as fast as they can get caught up. So it was like it was funny at least. My other team members that were with me were telling me that was hysterical.

00;24;02;00 - 00;24;08;28

Diana Alarcon

You two were the funniest thing. Two short legs just pedaling as fast as you can.

00;24;09;00 - 00;24;18;16

Emily Weidenhof

That's great. Well, definitely. As as public servants who are always trying to figure out how to get the most out of street space, we certainly know it's space we share.

00;24;18;17 - 00;24;18;26

Diana Alarcon

Yes.

00;24;18;26 - 00;24;21;24

Emily Weidenhof

And we should all take care of it for each other.

00;24;21;24 - 00;24;22;29

Diana Alarcon

Most definitely.

00;24;22;29 - 00;24;26;17

Emily Weidenhof

Appreciate your energy there.

00;24;26;20 - 00;24;27;24

Diana Alarcon

Thank you.

00;24;27;27 - 00;24;36;27

Emily Weidenhof

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Also, Diana, I want to ask you, what are you most enthusiastic for? The future of transportation?

00;24;36;29 - 00;25;04;29

Diana Alarcon

I what I'm most enthusiastic for is now people are really starting to understand the importance of there being multi-modes. And I know we don't use multimodal that much because it's not very sexy. And I get all of that, but I do I get excited because more people I talk to that are even car eccentric. They're all, for now, understanding the importance of having the space for a bike lane and creating that space.

00;25;04;29 - 00;25;24;15

Diana Alarcon

And I'm getting more excited because I can tell you, when I started this career and was having this conversation, there was like, nobody rides a bike lane, nobody needs a bike lane, nobody rides a bike. And if they do, they can be on the sidewalk full. Then we're people supposed to walk, you know? And they're like, now there's not that many people.

00;25;24;15 - 00;25;46;09

Diana Alarcon

We can all do it. But I think now more people understand the value of having a safe space for the person who's walking. Have the safe space for the person who's biking, have that safe space for a person and a car. And to have that safe space for transit or rail, whatever it is. That other mode, I think for the first time, people are starting to finally get it.

00;25;46;09 - 00;26;04;26

Diana Alarcon

And that to me is really exciting. You know, I always go all in and I'm like, let's talk about the level service for all the modes. I don't, I already I can almost I hate to say it, but I've been spending a lot of my career talking about level service for cars. I can do it in my sleep, but I want to talk about level service for everything else.

00;26;04;26 - 00;26;26;29

Diana Alarcon

And you can have those conversations now. And I can say when I started my career, it was it was pulling my wisdom teeth to have those conversations. And now you can walk in and you can talk about it and you can bring the data now to actually show the need. And people are much more open to those conversations than they were several years ago.

00;26;27;02 - 00;26;30;13

Emily Weidenhof

Most definitely. Well, Diana, thank you so much.

00;26;30;14 - 00;26;31;17

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Diana Alarcon

Oh my pleasure.

00;26;31;19 - 00;26;36;10

Emily Weidenhof

It was so fantastic. You are, such an inspiration.

00;26;36;11 - 00;26;36;25

Diana Alarcon

Thank you.

00;26;36;27 - 00;26;54;16

Emily Weidenhof

Creating so much opportunity to listen to Nashvillians and hear how they want to move.

Super excited to continue to follow your work and how you're transforming safety and experience and comfort and doing so with a lot of fun, in Nashville in the future.

00;26;54;16 - 00;26;59;25

Diana Alarcon

Well, thank you. And it was lovely to meet y'all. And it was great to see you last week. And,

00;26;59;25 - 00;27;00;12

Emily Weidenhof

Yeah!

00;27;00;12 - 00;27;02;01

Diana Alarcon

Yes, that was a great, great conference.

00;27;02;01 - 00;27;04;03

Emily Weidenhof

Yeah. Equity in Motion Summit.

00;27;04;05 - 00;27;23;25

Diana Alarcon

Yes. And oh and oh my gosh I love it. I, I did get your book on Complete Street and brought it back. So we're actually having some conversations. We're having some difficult intersections. And y'all have a really good point in there that. So I'm stealing some of that from you. That's another thing to tell people. You don't always have to have the idea.

00;27;23;25 - 00;27;26;04

Diana Alarcon

You can take it from someone else.

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00;27;26;07 - 00;27;30;02

Emily Weidenhof

Yes. Oh, always happy to share. Yes, exactly.

00;27;30;05 - 00;27;35;07

Diana Alarcon

Well thank you, ladies. I appreciate it. This was fun.

00;27;35;09 - 00;28;05;07

NYC DOT Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez

Hi. My name is Ydanis Rodriguez, commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation. Thank you for listening to Curb Enthusiasm by New York City DOT. This episode was produced by Michael Santos with video support from Sigurjon Gudjonsson, and Juan Vega.

00;28;05;07 - 00;28;08;16

NYC DOT Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez

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