Intro (00:00:01):

This session of the 2013 Adelaide Festival of Ideas was recorded by Radio Adelaide through the support of the Vast mid library, University of Adelaide, The University of South Australia library and Flinders University library,

Heather (00:00:16):

Breathing life into our cities corners. I would like to welcome John Hanlon, who is the deputy chief executive of the department of planning infrastructure and local government. John is also the chair of the Premier's vibrant cities task force, and it's their mission to make the city of Adelaide a more attractive place for all of us. We're very lucky to have John here with us this afternoon. He will be the chair of the session and will guide the panel through the discussion and also facilitate your questions at the end of the session. I must also thank John's department, the department of planning, transport, and infrastructure for supporting Jeff's fixed, travel to South Australia. Would you please welcome Mr. John Hanlon?

Speaker 3 (00:01:03):

[Inaudible]

John Hanlon (00:01:03):

Thanks Heather. And welcome everybody to this session. And this is going to be a very interactive session. It'll be a bit of a conversation with four very interesting people who I think you're going to see just how the city is changing by the way that these people are interacting with with our city. And so being a festival of ideas, we're going to make it very interactive as well. And so we will want you at some stage. I will give you the key that those people want to ask questions to come up and ask them questions and interact with the group of speakers up here today. This session is about breathing life into our city corners. And if you've been around Adelaide for a long time, you're probably seeing just on the horizon. Now, things starting to change. The city is changing. You've only got to look out there now and see what's happening on whether it be the river bank, whether it be our streets where the urbanisation of our city just what is going on and what's happening.

John Hanlon (00:01:58):

Adelaide is on the move. And we want to talk about that today and talk about what we need to do to, to keep that momentum going and to get it right, which is more important. It is about what good cities are all about, how they thrive and how we get the best potential out of them. How will breathe new life into our city streets and that now some people will go, we don't want the city to change, but I think it's inevitable that cities do change around the world. They keep growing and they keep moving, which has got to get that right. We've got to manage it. There are certain things that are absolute game-changers to changing a city. And we're going to talk about some of those, and we want some of your ideas and we're going to get some of the ideas from our panel here today.

John Hanlon (00:02:38):

So that's what the session is all about. But look just a couple of formalities. And the first thing is the, the garner welcome. I acknowledge that to die. We are gathered on the traditional country of Ghana people of the Adelaide Plains. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, their beliefs in their relationships with the land. We acknowledge that they are continuing importance to the Ghana people

and living today, and we respect their elders past and present. Can I also just ask as a formality, if anyone's got a mobile phone, can you at least turn it to silent mode? There are those people who I'm sure will be tweeting and Instagram and hashtags, and that you can keep using those, but please just have it in silent mode. You can't record these proceedings, but a radio Adelaide will be broadcasting this through podcasts in future podcasts.

John Hanlon (00:03:32):

Now I'm going to take a seat down here and introduce our first person for you to hear from and speak to her. And they're going to do it from here. So from here on, it's a conversation on my far right here is Jeff Speck, who is the principal of Speck Associates, or this is Jeff's first Australian tourist guest of the Adelaide Festival of Ideas. And welcome. And thanks today, Ted, for taking the time to spend with us. I know you here over the next three or four days, and you've been doing a lot of walking around the city. So it's going to be interesting to get your perspective, offering me rides. I know, and you don't want to be in a car. We know that Jeff's a city planner, he's an urban designer three's writing and his public service work, and he's built worky.

John Hanlon (00:04:15):

He advocates internationally for smart growth and sustainable design as a director of design and at the U S national endowment for the arts from 2003 to 2007 Jeff created the governor's Institute of community design. He is a co-author of the suburban nation, the rise of sprawl and the decline of the American dream. One of his recent publication is the walkable city. How downtown can save America one step at a time, which is a very interesting concept for us to be talking about in Adelaide right now. You know, and I wanted to, I was talking to Jeff earlier, and I know he has some history of this. We all know that through the fifties and sixties, that South Australia, Adelaide in particular was part of that manufacturing industry for the development of cars. And as you would all know, that's when the suburbs just started appearing on the horizon.

John Hanlon (00:05:06):

And we started seeing, instead of people coming towards a city, moving away from the sister cities. So the early 19 hundreds, we had reasonable density around our city. And then as the, as the car came in through the fifties and sixties started the freeways. And so did the urban sprawl start to occur and the reliance on cars start to occur. Now I know that Jeff is, has looked at this, and this is very much the American model and has looked at this and advocated a new way of thinking about this. And I'm just wondering, Jeff had to start this off. I mean, why should we care about that? What should we worry about at all? Just keep the sprawl going.

Jeff Speck (00:05:44):

I've seen the future and it's scary. Well, John, thank you for the kind of question and thanks to the Adelaide festival ideas and its sponsors for bringing me here. And it's wonderful to see such a crowd, especially since we're, I understand we're up against live vasectomies at this hour. Hopefully nothing like that will occur on this stage. And allow me to also take this opportunity to invite you, to see my solo act, which is tomorrow afternoon. I think it's here, but it's tomorrow at three. This will be a little bit of a preview of the ideas that I'll be addressing there. Thank you to my other panelists. I'm looking forward to the conversation and for that reason I won't be speaking for, for too long, cause I'm much more interested in, in the conversation. I'm glad the question wasn't, although I'll get to that perhaps eventually I'm glad the question wasn't, you know, yet what can Adelaide do better because Australian

cities in general and certainly Adelaide in particular are you know, typically doing the typical Australian cities not to say this is one of them are about, is have the walkability and the placemaking and the livability thing figured out about as well as the best American cities.

Jeff Speck (00:07:06):

So your cities don't have that much to learn from me. Your suburbs though, are about as bad as our worst and the way that you've spread is very similar. I would say not as, not as all encompassing, when you fly around Australia, as I've been doing, it's not as depressing as flying around the us, but, but certainly the trend here as in most places where there were auto industries has been towards suburbanization. And I've been arguing that the book that I wrote with my colleagues suburban nation about 13 or so years ago was a very firm kind of planner plan. I mean, we addressed it towards a popular audience, but it was a very firm planners rant about why cities were good in villages were good in towns were good. And basically anything pre-war was working pretty darn well. And those were the places that we liked and the suburbs were bad.

Jeff Speck (00:08:08):

And it was essentially approach from a planner's point of view. Most of us are trained as architects. We look at things aesthetically, but what's happened in the 10 or 15 years since we were having that conversation is a bunch of other groups have the question is why should we care that people weren't listening to the planner's argument, all that carefully because a, the planners screwed it up for so many years, really for 50 years, the planners were pushing the wrong model, right? And, and B, we were approaching it from a more aesthetic and design oriented point of view, which no design is cool, but that's really not the way that most people approach things the way that we've been trained to approach them. But what happened in these intervening, in those intervening 10 to 15 years is that these three groups that do listen to the economists, the epidemiologists and the environmentalist started each in their own ways.

Jeff Speck (00:09:03):

And each towards their own ends attacking the same question, the suburbanization versus urbanization or reorganization question that we had been addressing as planners and coming up with compelling reasons, not necessarily talking to each other or to us, but we eventually discovered each other, but they each came up with their own compelling reasons about why cities are stronger. Economically cities are healthier and cities are environmentally more sustainable than the alternative. So I'm going to touch upon each of those for one minute. The economics argument is essentially there are different ways to nibble around the edges and to talk about frankly, how you know, real estate is worth more in an urban environment. And to talk about all the different groups. Now, if you look at the demographics, there's a bubble of empty-nesters and a bubble of millennials, and in-between, there's strange people like me who have small children, a rarity.

Jeff Speck (00:10:01):

Now, all these reasons to think that the city, the kind of living environment that serves all the households that are about to be generated is much more likely to be in an urban living environment than a suburban living environment where people don't need or want big houses to heat and cool, and clean and yards to tend. Don't really care about schools at this point, because it's a small number of households that actually have children of school bearing age, and that at least in the U S that's, all we've been building for for 50 years is that market. And that's a very interesting discussion, like a market based

businessmen's discussion, but the most, much more powerful economic discussion I believe is, is the great cost to our society. Over the, since the seventies in the U S we've doubled the number of roads in our country and in, so doing we've doubled the percent of your income that every American is spending on transportation.

Jeff Speck (00:10:57):

So now, you know, we used to spend one 10th of our income on transportation. Now we spend one fifth working Americans spend more on transportation than on housing. And this challenge actually will, I can't afford to live in the city because it costs too much. If you factor the cars into account, it may not cost too much to live in the city. And then those American cities and those north American cities like Portland, Oregon, and Vancouver that have invested instead of investing in driving, have invested in biking and transit. And therefore in walking are the hot places right now and have saved their residents so much money that they're able to spend a lot more locally. So that's a half an hour discussion and two minutes the epidemiologist argument, there's a book that came out in 2004 called urban sprawl and public health. And while we had been shouting into the wilderness for, for years about the ugliness and the anime of sprawl, these doctors came out and said, suburban sprawl is killing us.

Jeff Speck (00:12:03):

It's making us fat. It's making us sick. It is shortening lifespans. We've the first generation of kids in America who are expected to live shorter lives than their parents because of environmentally induced inactivity. And we now have what are called obesogenic communities, which is essentially everything in your outer ring is no obesogenic community. And then add to that asthma and car crashes. And the statistic that was out today was 87,000 Americans are dying each year from the combination of car crashes and tailpipe exhaust. So there's a larger argument, but that the doctors now are on board and people listen to doctors. And then finally the environmentalist in America are fascinating for the way that they turned on a dime in a country, which has historically the environmental movement in the U S was an anti city movement. And that was only reinforced by the carbon mapping of the U S where you look at CO2 per square mile.

Jeff Speck (00:12:58):

And it looks like a night sky, satellite photo of the U S hottest in the cities cooler in the suburbs, coolest in these ex-urban areas. But then when they, when someone had the bright idea, you know, we shouldn't be measuring per square mile. We should be measuring per household because there's only so many of us in the country at any given time. And we can choose to live where we might have the least footprint and the maps just flipped entirely, you know, cool in the center, cities, little warmer in the suburbs and red hot in these ex urban driving oriented communities. So these three arguments now, or what I gird myself with when I come to communities, I don't talk about planning reasons anymore. And I've found that we're able to make a lot more change by paying attention to these things that affect people's pocketbook and their health, and you know, their ability to stay above water for the next 50 years. So with that, I'll hand it over. Thanks,

John Hanlon (00:13:50):

Jeff. So if you want to hear more about that, tomorrow is another time you have to come in three o'clock to Jeff and somewhere in, I think you get a lot more detail about that. I need you to come and sit in some of my meetings with me as I have these a number of people wanting us to resign so much land on the fringe. And those conversations are often very interesting with the people who are in the land, of

course, but that's another story. Have you noticed? There's a difference. I don't want to be rude, Jeff, but there is a difference between the two bookends and the three people in the middle. And it's not the fact that they're just wearing jeans. You know, they are a little younger than us but they are the face of the future of our city and what we're doing and the enormous amount of influence they have over cities and, and and where we're heading from a, from a development point of view, the first of these people I want you to meet is Lily Jacobs the general manager of Renew Adelaide as a general manager in Renew Adelaide, Lily is continuing her interest in innovative renewal of urban spaces, a not-for-profit organization that connects creative entrepreneurs and artists with property and industry to activate empty spaces or vacant urban space in cities and end in some of our suburbs as well.

John Hanlon (00:15:06):

In previous roles. Lilly was a commercial and intellectual property lawyer. She taught property law and urban theory at Adelaide university. And she's one of those people that you're seeing around the city at the moment who, when she sees an empty building, she's all over it and making sure that that is activated and something is happening in there. And lots of people around Adelaide although a lot of credit and thanks to what Lily's doing around the revitalisation of the city, but Lily tell us a little bit about firstly renew Adelaide and what it's doing and how it's doing it. And perhaps perhaps talk to us about how much you perhaps want government and local government to stay out of dictating what you do and how you do it and let it happen.

Lily Jacobs (00:15:55):

Thank you. That was great. Well, when you add light, it's, it's an unusual model. But everyone explained it to you. It sort of makes sense on that once they understand it. But part of, I mean, a city is, is composed of sort of the social community and the economic aspects, but it is very much that concept of cities very much grounded in a physical presence as well. And you know, there are, you know, buildings around that. And so what we do is try and make sure that there is interesting activity going on in those properties. And that we don't have a lot of vacancies because a vacancy is a dead space. Nobody wants to walk down the street. If there's nothing to see, nobody wants to live or invest or anything in an area where there's no activity. So where there are vacant properties we try and connect those with people who have ideas of how to fill them.

Lily Jacobs (00:16:54):

And a lot of the people with interesting ideas and the ability to act quickly to do it artists and creative entrepreneurs, and they can also bring something different to a city and to a building, to a property that gives people a reason to go there. And at the same time, you're encouraging this creative community, which I guess that's why I'm doing this is because I feel like it's a really important part of a city. I'm sold on cities. I live in the city, I work in the city. And I just, I think the creative aspect is really important how we do that is what people find unusual. So we negotiate with property owners who have a vacancy that is either awaiting commercial leasing, or awaiting redevelopment for access to that property rent free, which is obviously a really, really easy thing to do.

Lily Jacobs (00:17:50):

The way that we do it. And the only way that it will work is that the property can remain advertised on the market. And so at any point we can be given 30 days notice to leave. So that way the property owner is not actually taking on the risk of losing a potential commercial tenant. That's the only way it works. The flip side of that is still that it can limit what can go on in there in the space. Nothing that is

going to require security, you know, in a number of months time. But it, those limitations can also inspire really interesting activity. And so we've seen a number of different types of projects go on. People who make their own product. Some people have made their clothes and sold them in the same space or a reading room, which is sort of a reading space that also held odd events.

Lily Jacobs (00:18:43):

There's a few in port Adelaide, niche sophisticated his word, probably not mine DVD, higher place, but they're all ideas that wouldn't get off the ground without this like low risk opportunity to test them. So there are a lot of people who have ideas, but don't necessarily have capital. And this is a very low risk opportunity for people to test and grow ideas and be able to stay here and do it in the city. So it's what I explain it to people it's a win, win, win. It's a win for somebody with an idea it's a win for a property owner, and it's a win for the city as a whole. So no one argues with it, but it still doesn't mean it's easy to talk property owners into it. And then we have also provided because we developed this and I didn't ever think I'd have some expertise around property. People who are wanting to take the next step into a longer term committed commercial lease, sort of guide them through some of that process and identify buildings. We don't charge anyone for any of this, which is where our relationship with government comes in. And that has actually for what we're doing, it's actually been a really good relationship. And I think as John said, because there isn't a lot of control put on us about the way we do things

John Hanlon (00:20:09):

How hard that is for a government not to put controls on something. It's like, we want to control everything. We want to legislate it out or legislated in. So you're having, you're having an impact on us. There's no doubt.

Lily Jacobs (00:20:22):

Well, we, we try and sort of do that and make sure that we all understand that dynamic, but it has been a really good relationship. And I think partly because the government currently, I mean, a lot of people are on the same page with what the sort of aiming for. So support for creative activity and new ideas. I mean, government can be a slow moving machine. We all know that, but I think that's a reason why it is good. We're a not for profit organisation. I mean, we were started purely volunteer, run and volunteer based. So it's an idea that came from the community. And I think that is important in government partnerships to respect things that are already happening. And yeah, that has been a really good aspect of it that what we're doing and as an organiser that, I mean, I do have a board that is its own slow process, I guess, as well and political process.

Lily Jacobs (00:21:18):

I love them if anyone's here. But you know, that means that we operate quite independently as well, and we are accountable, but we are still a flexible organisation. And by being small, when we're very small, we can still act quickly which, you know, often government is limited in their ability to do that because of course they need to be accountable to the people, which I do believe in democracy. But in my organisation I believe a bit more in dictatorship. And so so I think that that balance of support from government whilst still allowing growth from the community and adaptable organisations to actually implement some of that is important part of our relationship.

John Hanlon (00:22:06):

Thank you. Next is Peter Drew. Peter is a straight artist born in Adelaide. He's still living in Glasgow,

Jeff Speck (00:22:16):

Not right at the moment. Now I've realised that I was living in Glasgow. I moved back in about a week ago.

John Hanlon (00:22:22):

Peter has been working as a gorilla artists in the streets of Adelaide. And you may well have seen some of his work around the place. He recently completed a research master's that the Glasgow school of art, since 2011 Peter's work has found international acclaim with these series of 1920s, archival mugshots took over the streets of Adelaide. You might've seen popping up on various walls in that I think he got approval for them. He just was out there in the middle of the night, making it happen. During his research at the Glasgow school of art threatened Peter with expulsion freezes, illegal street artwork around the streets of Glasgow. Ironically enough, he's researched at the school, examined the tension between large institutions and urban art. The short documentary who arranged the street, which Peter wrote and presented, which recently celebrated that the Sheffield doc Fest Peter is currently producing an online series, titled the art world versus reality.

John Hanlon (00:23:18):

And his project featuring quotations from Romeo and Juliet can now be seen on the streets of Adelaide. So when you go to bed at night and you wake up the next morning and you drive into the city, if you do that, not drive you walk into the city you will see that something has popped up on a street wall somewhere often. It's one of Peter or his team who have been out doing things, not all overnight, you know, do it all in the, during the day. It must have been during the day, but certainly I'm just wondering Peter, the LA is beginning to understand the value of straight art in our, in our line wise in our streets, in your opinion, we fostering the culture. Well, are we doing it right? Are we doing it wrong? What do we need to do? Or a guidance is something we just need to stay out of.

Peter Drew (00:24:05):

Well, I think Adelaide is doing it better than most cities, but I think if there's something that I can probably help to explain is that it's, I mean, when a street artist or definitely a graffiti writer wake up in the morning, they don't sort of say, right, let's increase the vibrancy of the city. It's not, it's an unintended consequence. And there's so, and something that I'm interested in is the the conflict between straight artists, graffiti writers and civic authorities. And if it wasn't for that conflict, if it was just if it was completely legitimize for one of the better phrase then it wouldn't be as interesting. And it wouldn't, it wouldn't have the same effect. So I think if I'd like to do anything better or any city could do something better with the grads to straight out, it would be to have a, I guess, an authentic appreciation of a subculture and realize that it's not something to tame and simply point in the right direction.

Peter Drew (00:25:11):

There's always going to be ways in which they tolerance can have great effects in the forms of murals, but street art is a, is a subculture, which is essentially based on the notion of, of vandalism, of of illegally painting or marking a property, which isn't yours for the purpose of communicating. And obviously there's a, there's a spectrum within that of people that just want an instruction. And then the other end of the spectrum, there's people that want to communicate in doing things which which the vast majority of people would find beneficial. And so well actually to quote John Ray, we, we we had made a documentary about straight out and the, one of the best things that he said about it was that you can't

legislate it too much, because if you, if you simply just make it all obviously all work graffiti or all sort of vandalism is illegal.

Peter Drew (00:26:14):

But if you enforce that to the, to the full letter of the law and leave no room for human discretion, then things which are technically illegal, but strangely enough beneficial would get a stamped out a lot of the projects which I've done in which lots of other straight artists in Adelaide and around the world do they're completely illegal. And that's not going to change but it's tolerated because it's, it brings life to the city. So I think, yeah, the, the idea that street art is perhaps they it's aggravated has evolved into something, which is nice and good for everybody. It's slightly instead of, it's not, it's not quite an entirely tree. It's, there's always going to be conflict there. And if there wasn't, it wouldn't be as interesting as it is. It's a P

John Hanlon (00:27:11):

I mean, what, what happens with this is that Peter, you don't tag, it's not like our graffiti workers going on around the place. And often we have, when we see this art come up in various places, you know, people who have got the job of dying, removing graffiti in that actually go, I'm not removing that, that that's, it, that's a piece of art. We've actually got to do something with it. We're going to encourage this. It looks a lot better than

Jeff Speck (00:27:34):

What the original wall or area was. It

John Hanlon (00:27:37):

Creates something for the place. And often that is what, what you're doing if you seen this through the states as well. Yeah. But

Jeff Speck (00:27:44):

I was having a strange correlation, or I guess analogy run through my head as you were describing the circumstances because of it's, if it derives its energy and perhaps some of the motivation comes from the illegality of it. So you don't want to make it legal perhaps, or fully illegal, but then again, if you have a paint over campaign, that's universal, as you suggested, then we don't get to benefit from the art. It sounds to me like some of the marijuana laws we have in the us, which is that you're allowed to smoke it, but you're not allowed to sell it. And perhaps if you make it completely illegal to create street art, but then you're not allowed to remove any of it, you'd have an allergist program, which could be very interesting.

Speaker 8 (00:28:27):

Yeah. Yeah.

Peter Drew (00:28:29):

I mean, it's one of those, I mean, that's what I think it's so interesting is that it's a, there are no easy answers to it. I mean, obviously property is valuable. We need to protect people's property rights. On the other hand, expression is valuable and graffiti is the point in which those two principles conflict, and they always will always have, it's not something that just came about in the, in the 1970s when people

paper, New York started using aerosol paint to do it, it's been around forever. But it's, it's certainly funny how things have changed in the last 10 years that city planners, civic authorities have realized that hang on, this is a thing that we can use to divide spaces or bring life to the city. I think a big part of that change is that during the, I mean, when graffiti first came about the way in which it was understood was under a theory called the broken window theory, which was published in non-entity two and under broken window theory, the idea is legit say to use the analogy which the theory uses, if you have a few broken windows and they're left on fixed that will, it will show it sort of the environment that crime is not being policed and it encourages more disobedience.

Peter Drew (00:29:47):

And then that turns into a little more crime, and eventually you've got violent crime and serious crime. So graffiti came under that and that helped to justify implementing a zero tolerance towards graffiti, which that phrase zero tolerance just became the became very popular for civic authorities across the world. And so what that does is just stamp out any kind of illegal markings. And now that's sort of slowly being reversed and realized that it's, it's a much more sort of difficult balancing act between obviously you can't just let graffiti go everywhere and it's it wouldn't make for a vibrant city either, but it's a balancing between having absolutely none and having a little bit. So,

John Hanlon (00:30:39):

So have a look around their city streets and have a look at some of this artwork that's going up there. It is quite exceptional. And, and certainly something that I'm not sure I can say encourage it is it's one of those things. I just go, it's part of creating a city and, and activating spaces and places I can say. I've never seen Peter in my office putting in a development application for example, and I don't expect to see him. Our next speaker is is Travis rants. And Travis has been training in the art of park or since the beginnings of Adelaide community for over seven years now. He's currently spends his time across several roles related to the emerging training discipline of park, or as an Australian park or association committee member, the south Australian packer association, founder, and president head instructor for Adelaide and founder and entrepreneur of the city training venue called point. I, Travis spends upwards of 50 hours a week across those roles. And majority of it is volunteer. Work is about getting people active, moving like real humans, again he advocates for transform formative power of park or, and a strong park or community. And your probably going to be like me and say, this is park or all about, and this is the man that is going to tell you what park hall is all about. Yeah.

Peter Drew (00:32:05):

Cool. So park, you may have seen in videos and stuff, even if you hadn't heard the name, it looks like we're using the city like an obstacle course. So to running, jumping, climbing, scaling walls, balancing on railings, all sorts of acrobatic looking movements around the city, but it's actually got a bit more depth to it. It's a lot of people think it's sort of an adrenaline junkie thrill-seeking thing. It's actually quite the opposite. It's a training discipline, which is about training yourself to be useful in an emergency. So if I need to reach or escape, I can use my body and I can get away from someone, get over to someone to help them. That's kind of the training goal, which we use to inform what we do for park or for in training park. Or you also just have the initial benefits of physical activity, getting fit, getting strong.

Peter Drew (00:32:52):

It also has a really strong community element because behind the ideas of training to be useful in an emergency comes a philosophy of altruism and building that useful strength, building a strong

community so that people around you are also useful and helpful. So when you collect a bunch of people who are doing that together, you get a really strong sort of community atmosphere. And it builds a really strong group of people who have those values embedded in the culture park or has been growing well for seven years in Adelaide, but for about 10 years in Australia. And it's only about 25 years old. So it's a very new thing, but it's gone global very quickly, mostly due to videos on the internet, things like that. So there's park or communities popping up pretty much everywhere in the world. There's a park or Gaza group. There's partial communities in every country, as far as we can work out. Some of them are very hard to find though, and everywhere that it's popping up, it's sort of creating this energy in this community, which has been really cool to see. And the communities are mostly very well connected around the globe. So we're pushing the discipline together as well as in our local areas.

John Hanlon (00:34:01):

I didn't even know that existed in Adelaide and, but it is massive. And there's a lot of people. And I think one of the things about what, what the people you have in front of, you got a person that plans for spices and tries to make them creative and make them part of an urban environment. You got someone that takes every vacant space they can find and try and use it and put it into, into an economic place or a creative place. If someone's prepared to draw all over them. And you've got someone ready to climb all over them as well, but that is what's happening. And I think you know, from us as, as people who are urban planning or have responsibility for development and the growth of cities, we just have to understand what is around us and what is happening and the different people that are, that are involved in it.

John Hanlon (00:34:44):

And what's going on in our cities. The, this is happening every day in our city. And we can't turn that back on it, that things are changing the faces of changing. One of the key things that have happened to Adelaide, especially over the last probably decade to 10 to 20 years in many ways has been the biggest drain on our population has been people under the age of 30 leaving. You may very well have family members, but are going to Melbourne or going to Sydney or going overseas. And I noticed with, with a couple of ministers, we just started in not in an improper way tracking where these people were going. It's just what was happening. So we went and looked for people who were the young people under 30, where did we find them? We found them in Sydney. We found them in Melbourne.

John Hanlon (00:35:35):

We, we found them in all sorts of cities around the world and said, you know, why he left LA? What is it? And it's amazing because we just haven't and embraced a lot of the things that's just been discussed just now. We have been very conservative in the way we we've developed and the way we've gone. And we haven't looked at our city and we haven't looked at the opportunities that we can create for younger people to stay here. It is all in our benefit. Anyone who's lost any family member overseas or interstate would love them to be back here, living in Adelaide. And it always is a bit much. And I know my daughter has done the same thing and said, oh, don't worry, dad, I'll come back. When it's time to have children, you are the fifth, most livable city in the world, you know, and you go, well, that's really great, but I actually want you here now.

John Hanlon (00:36:23):

And how do we do that? And, and, and part of what we created in government, and we got that title, which I know some people say we wish it was never invented the vibrant city program. And I just keep

saying, forget about that. What it was about is having more people living in our city was having more people working in our city, have more people investing in our city and more people staying longer in our city. That's what we wanted. We wanted to create an environment that everyone could be proud of. And, and everyone could see as a place that you could come here and enjoy whatever it is that you do in life. And, and that's what we wanted out. That's what we're trying to achieve. It's not been easy because it's very hard one to stop the urban sprawl and have just the suburbs rolling out.

John Hanlon (00:37:10):

And, and as Jeff said, I'm at the forefront of looking at the cost to government in relation to urban sprawl, you know, not only from an infrastructure, but you're the health requirements for that. You know, if you think about what, what we have to do to build educational health facilities, to support that was, we're losing those people out of our, in Metro schools, in that, or our health and institutions. And we want to bring people back in, but we've got to create an environment that people want to live in as well. And some people want the suburban backyard and that's great. It is about choice, but we probably haven't provided enough choice over a long period of time. And so, but I'm sure they straight people here, probably aren't looking right at this point in time for the, the backyard, the big seven 50 square meter block of land and all of those sorts of things.

John Hanlon (00:38:02):

They're looking for a different experience. And that's why we want them talking G to di about what it is that we have to manage and what it is. We've got to try and develop as, as a city. And for some of us, that's foreign for some of us. It's what is this? What are these people doing? But this is real. And there's plenty of them. If you don't provide it here, there's other cities around the world that provide that. And as I said, our greatest try that greatest loss of population is people under the age of 30. And we can't afford that. Can't afford as a, with being much more competitive than that. And we have to start creating the right environments for people to work in. Now, I'm just going to throw to these groups, this group of people for a couple of more things, and then I'm going to ask you to come to the microphone.

John Hanlon (00:38:48):

If you've got some questions to ask, because we want this to be interactive in the center, you'll need the line up. And I desperately need you to ask some questions, not my statements, ask some questions to these group of people. But before we do that, I've asked them to just two things I did is teach. If you said, you wish I wouldn't do this, right, I'm going to do this two things. What if you are going to recommend two things to the government, to local government, to people like myself, what is it that we have to do? What would be those two things that you'd say, John do this, and this would be a different place remembering that what we're talking about today is not so much urbanization or anything like that. We're about, about breathing life into our city corners about building on what you're seeing happening out there now. So, Jeff, what is it that you'd be suggesting?

Jeff Speck (00:39:39):

So it's, it's something that was echoed already the first thing. And I think the biggest thing, because the other things we'll all follow from this, but there's a clear, very strong jobs, housing jobs slash housing imbalance in your downtown. The reason that you're losing, it sounds like most places I'm working in, I work in the mid sized cities in America, where they all say, how can we attract millennials? But some of them just say, how can we keep our kids here? And how can we keep our grandkids here? You know, it's the town, fathers and mothers saying, how can we keep our kids here? And then you look downtown.

And the only real residential that's being built is luxury condos for the, what we call the dentists from New Jersey, who decide they want to, they want to have a more urban life. And certainly the front end boomers are, are a big, big audience, potentially the largest audience for invigorating your downtown around the clock.

Jeff Speck (00:40:35):

But you walk around Adelaide now, and it is, it is full of folks, but you walk around at night and it's not. And cities what I'm learning here. And I've been to Perth already. Cities in Australia faced the same challenge that cities in America face, which is in less, the city itself becomes an act door in making it easier and less expensive for developers to build large amounts of small size apartments in the downtown. It isn't particularly profitable for them to do that. So the first thing I would, I would say is to Institute a, an office of millennial housing attainability in your city government, and have someone show up every day saying, it's my job to get more young people living downtown because they want to live downtown. They just need that opportunity. And then secondly, I guess I would say I was recently at a conference with and Rica.

Jeff Speck (00:41:33):

Losa the famous mayor who transformed Bogota, Columbia, and he was presenting to us and he said, isn't it wonderful in America? You have a constitution that says that you're all equal under the law. Think about that. That means that a bus with 80 people in it deserves 80 times as much road space as a car with one person in it and a bike lane that, you know, bikes take up what one 20th, the space of a car, you should be allocating your to the degree that you could keep providing more bike lanes and the protected bike lanes that you lack to the degree that those are filling up with bikes and they will, they're, you're having a much more efficient city. You have much more mobile city, you're moving more people per square foot of roadway. And you're actually addressing what I would hope and suspect are the founding principles of your nation, which is that everyone is equal under the law and perhaps reducing your speed limit from 50 to 40. Like all the other cities in Australia would be a good start as well. That's good.

John Hanlon (00:42:38):

Just put up, count clocks on some of our intersections that does something. It's amazing how that makes that's changing Adelaide. I don't know whether you're using them now. I wouldn't suggest you try running when there's four seconds to go or anything like that. But it has actually said, it's the start. And I said, the earlier the starter things changing, and it has actually said, pedestrians actually should be having more power over our streets than in a city. Can

Jeff Speck (00:43:05):

I say what the cars have? Firstly, a third thing. And again, you guys, we all, I try and teach American cities to be like Portland. And you guys are already, you're doing as well as Portland and most of you in most of your categories, but having walked around Perth and I'll say south Australia, now your signal K forgive the technical approach. Your signalization regimes here in south Australia are really bad. And if you look at a, if you look at a similar story, you can stand at an intersection where there's just two lanes of traffic going by you, a near section that within five, five seconds, you'd find your way across in the U S and you wait and you wait and you wait, great. We have something called a leading pedestrian indicator where the pedestrian is to cross the crosswalk first, before any cars turn in the intersection and hear that you

let all the cars turn and then you get the green. So I can say one thing to, to help you. There's a tree, you know, maybe it's gotten better, but there's a clear hierarchy where the

John Hanlon (00:44:09):

Better it's improving our history is, were run by traffic engineers.

Jeff Speck (00:44:14):

Yeah, well, so we're all of our cities, but somehow your signalization regimes here are worse or worse than

John Hanlon (00:44:18):

Ours. So something I can agree with that, wouldn't we thank you, Lily. Here's your chance. Here's a chance to tell us

Lily Jacobs (00:44:30):

To stay out. Think I'm going to say things related to property, I guess. Cause that's what we do. Although there are probably other things. One of them, things that we deal with a lot, which is incredibly boring to most people is including me, is building code. It's really hard to alter the use of a building. So if it was used as a retail space to then go and use it as a gallery legally, which now that we are knowing there's a bit more people look at what we're doing, including the council planning departments. So to change a use of it, which is really, really hard and prohibitive to most people to have something that is a place of public assembly like here the access requirements, the fire requirements that eager us so great. And a lot of older buildings, the cost of upgrade would just it's completely would take off the cards.

Lily Jacobs (00:45:35):

The cost of renting a building that already has that is also takes it off the cards. And I know that there, some of that is there for safety purposes and it's been thought three and I can't argue with it, but there is, there is interpretive room and there are practical solutions to some of the building code requirements. And our advice to a lot of people now is hire a private certifier rather than use the free service because you will save yourself a lot of money because they will find solutions to do things, even give you building advice look at it practically. And that that's a real problem for a lot of people. So I think either some training it's like a human resources thing and how to look at that or just, you know, get rid of the building inspection service offered entirely and just give people money to get a private certifier.

Lily Jacobs (00:46:33):

I know that there is starting to be a shift in that I think, but it is still a difficult process. It is completely unpredictable as to, what's going to come back that you need to do you and logistically it's, you know, I don't know how long it's going to take for anything either because if they come back with something else. And so that's a really hard one. So I guess, yeah, resources training the other, probably not something that you can do easily and without a lot of backlash is in Holland. They have, I think it's Holland what they call a percent for dark tax, which is for building owners who, if you leave your prop, if you don't do anything with your property for 12 months, then you are taxed for that. So you might be awaiting approvals for development, but in the meantime, what can you do to keep it alive?

Lily Jacobs (00:47:26):

So it's percent, you know, you might trying to lease it, which is, you know, probably wouldn't get the tax, but you've gotta be actively trying to do it. I know that there are buildings around town, one in a really key location that they have a for lease sign on it on it's a big complex, but their rents are purposely set so high that no one would lease the space because they're not really interested in leasing. It it's there as a land banking opportunity. So yeah, that's that'd be a political fight to get that, but it's as a concept, as a concept, you know, it's, it's got some merit. So

John Hanlon (00:48:07):

Now we're going to ask you guys one and can people who want to ask questions to start lining up. Why give you want to ask the question? Can you please be by that microphone? And then I'll, I'll turn to you in two seconds.

Peter Drew (00:48:18):

I just wanted to agree with a couple of things that Jeff and Lily said. I mean, the whole thing about empty buildings. I mean, there's a, there's a, it's a hobby in Adelaide for people my age to explore empty buildings because there's so many of them around town. And, and when you realize that these individuals or companies are using them just as a sort of full financial means, keeping them empty, it's kind of banks actually made a really interesting quote about it recently from the John Steinbeck novel rapes of graph, the graph is that it's a, it's a sin to have a fallow land sort of to have this assets and to let it sort of rot in front of everybody and yeah, in Adelaide is full of places like that. But I thought the signals of squat funny as well. I mean, I think part of being someone that lives in Adelaide is being good at sort of just figuring out when you can cross because the signals are just useless.

Peter Drew (00:49:21):

And, and in terms of living in a house, I sort of imagined one day I might live in suburbia, but I just having come from living in Glasgow for a year more than happy to live in a flat, I think, I mean, that city has made out of sort of four-story tenements everywhere and you can just, you can walk everywhere. I got along just fine for a whole year without, without owning a car and then came back here and it's just like, oh, I'm gonna have to drive her everywhere. It's just, it's it's I mean, urban sprawl that we will live. If it's not, it's not natural. It's sort of a, it's something that's just come out of the last hundred years. And it's, I mean, the whole idea of having a, every person owning their own little block of land or a little kingdom, it's kind of a weird thing. And I sort of remember it dawning on me at some point, like one's ever going have to have their own little patch of land, but in terms of what I do with straight up, I think the best thing that civic authorities can do is just have a sense of tolerance about it. Don't try to sort of push into a box in which it is all sort of completely,

John Hanlon (00:50:30):

We will not, we will not ask you for an application. I've got to go, I've got to keep me just

Peter Drew (00:50:36):

Quick one. I think I've got two quick ones, the splash Adelaide program project, the council's run where they help you run events in the city. They deal with the paperwork internally in the council road closures, things like that has been great. It's helped a lot of people, including myself, throw some really cool events. But as soon as you step outside special Adelaide, then you have to deal with the council from the front door. And it is a nightmare. It's impossible. And it takes a long time. So having some people in here having some sort of middle ground between the council supports event and oh yeah,

you're gonna have to do all the paperwork from the start. And we have no idea what even needed fill out would be nice. The second thing I'd like to suggest is public space. I know the new role edit Royal Adelaide hospital site is being transformed into public space, creating public space where people have the freedom to do random stuff rather than this is for you to book for a festival. And this is a new building for the casino and just creating space for improvised stuff to happen.

Speaker 3 (00:51:32):

Don, thank you. [inaudible]

John Hanlon (00:51:38):

Questions. Please make them questions and not statements and more leg.

Speaker 8 (00:51:43):

Yes. Yeah. Okay. First question. Second question. Well basically in all the things you've been talking about today, I didn't heard that here. The word Parklands and Parklands are something that Adelaide many people who live here think that that makes us a bit unique. I don't know whether that's quite so true, but I'm wondering what you actually think in the things that you're talking about today. What do the Parklands play? How can they play a role?

John Hanlon (00:52:08):

Do you have, do you want to give a quick answer to that? It was, it was wonderful to

Jeff Speck (00:52:11):

Just whenever I'm going to a city for the first time, I'd get onto Google, Google maps and check it out. And it was wonderful to discover this little, little Vienna floating and on the south, if you know what I'm talking about floating on the south coast of Australia, but the, the park ring you have around your city center, it's a beautiful diagram. And in fact, the I'm digressing now, but the, the city plan that you have the original right plan of the four squares each with its own park in the center. And then the central square that belongs to the whole central part of the city is a brilliant diagram. Reminds me of Savannah in the U S and I guess Philadelphia to a certain degree, but it's, you know, a great diagram never dies and that's supporting your city in a powerful way. I know one of the mayor's objectives and he's a planner and he's super smart is to reinforce that diagram.

Jeff Speck (00:53:03):

And that means to take those four smaller squares that you've got eat each of which has been under and the central one, each of which has been undermined to a greater or lesser degree by the desire to move cars through it, across it, around it, trimmed at the edges, cut through the middle and to reassert that diagram. And then speaking only to what I about, because I haven't seen the larger metropolis, but obvious, I don't think it's at any risk, obviously doing everything you can to reinforce the power of that ring that just makes your city so special. Thank you.

Speaker 8 (00:53:39):

Yes. Hello. I was saying the bus about a month back to 20 year old sitting in front of me, who rather say at the loss of the Jade monkey music venue and that the Jade monkey was quite an old not very attractive building, but nonetheless very useful. What's going up in its place is a pretty staying at hotel.

And one of the things that struck me, it's not just about the business's dock texts, but the business of any developer compensating for the loss of something that was already there and useful to the community. Two issues. We also had the same problem with the orange line market, which was destroyed.

John Hanlon (00:54:26):

Can you ask a question, sorry. I'm

Speaker 8 (00:54:29):

Wanting to see a solution which sees that developers great a venue every time they'd destroy a venue and getting away from this idea of one building one purpose, we haven't seen too much of mixed users the summit that has happened. So I'm wondering whether there's a specific ideas which are being used, whether that's compensation requirements or whatever other cities or in your experience, which allows that to happen.

John Hanlon (00:55:02):

Well, maybe I can give a quick answer to that in the sense of totally agree with what you're saying in relation to that. I think you see that a lot more as happening in relation to what we're requesting now from developments of, in this state about what they have to bring back into our city and mix use is now being put into all of our planning processes and activation of ground floor and their interaction with public space, an absolute from here that all the changes that have just been made to the planning system. And I might just add anyone now, building in the city, anyone that builds anywhere in metropolitan Adelaide, if you build an apartment building now for every apartment, you have to pay $6,800 into the planning and development fund, which has put back into public spaces in the state. So for some developments, that's a million to a million and a half dollars that they need to pay that allows us then to spend on some of our open spaces, just as a general, but take your point in relation to that. Yes.

Speaker 8 (00:55:56):

I agree with everything Jeff said about suburban development, but I wonder if you could tell me what sort of problems there be when we build enormous unlimited height, high rises in the city in water known as catalyst sites, which can be anywhere in the city, regardless of the surrounding levels of buildings,

Jeff Speck (00:56:21):

The height of buildings related to those around them is more of an aesthetic discussion and more of a neighbor, neighbor discussion, certainly places change, but their character's important. So I don't want to suggest that the character of a place as a lower rise neighborhood does not have value. When I then go on to say that I'm all for it, or at least in, in greater earth, in the, in the city center, in the places that are well-served by transit and one hopes cycling and walking where residents can hope to come without an automobile and have a fruitful lifestyle without an automobile. There's really very little to be said against the sky, being the limit for residential development. Thanks,

John Hanlon (00:57:16):

Jeff. Now we're going to run out of time. I know this because they've got me on a strict timeframe, so I'm, ain't going to be allowed to let two more questions be asked, sorry, but I would ask those people want to ask questions, please speak to is outside of the room, but two questions. That's all we've got time for. Sorry. thanks.

Speaker 8 (00:57:36):

I would hope you would say yes, but does the panel really believe that we can design vibrant spices that welcome people? And the reason I'm asking is because much some of the things that I see is really around space has been designed Sundar public space, being designed and for the purpose of consumerism. And then there's a little mechanism there to bring, bring shoppers in instead of creating a space where people want to congregate naturally and then have perhaps other services, including shops. Do you want to have gardens?

Lily Jacobs (00:58:13):

Sorry. Yeah, no, I was thinking, I started thinking as you were asking the question, so I missed the question.

Speaker 8 (00:58:22):

I'm just wondering whether w w if we sat around together, could we actually really design a vibrant space?

Lily Jacobs (00:58:29):

I think that's what I was thinking about is the design part of it. I don't know that, that you can just design it as much as kind of take away some of the barriers to it and make things sort of more attractive for people to test ideas or try new. I mean, from what we're doing it's activities, but make it easier for people to live is not always just a design solution as a sort of scaling back solution. But I think that the combination, I think it's possible. Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 8 (00:59:06):

I'm a transport engineer and are not evil people. I've got a lot of parking both in the city and also the suburban areas. And we obviously need to wean ourselves off this, a question to JF is how are we going to do this? I, and who do we blame? Do we blame the planning system that may, that we've got to have one car park for every 200 square meters everywhere except for a tiny or the CBD, or do we blind the population who screamed blue murder every time they have the prospect of paying for parking in a suburban area?

Jeff Speck (00:59:41):

Or do you blame the financiers who will fund the development of a new building, unless it's got parking provided, which I don't know if that's the case here, but that's certainly the standard in the U S

John Hanlon (00:59:53):

And it's the case here. Yeah.

Jeff Speck (00:59:55):

So, I mean, the, on the one hand, you don't want to waste all the parking. You've got, you have a lot of investment that you've made in parking spaces, in parking structures, and I'm thinking in the CBD cause that's what I care about that you want to put to use. And I'll talk about that. On the other hand, the more you put that parking to use, the more there's going to be people driving on your streets. So the more parking you provide and you utilize, unless people are just stowing the car for that trip to the Hills on the weekend, the more parking you provide and utilize the more pressure you're putting on traffic within the streets themselves. So with the, with the fear of that traffic, I would say what we've had great success doing in a few American cities is actually pooling the parking emptiness, pooling the void as an asset, which is then given to developers. If they build a significant amount of housing nearby that parking lot, thereby allowing them to meet their financing requirements while providing parking, by providing parking that they don't have to pay for. And that can lower the cost of new housing by 20-30%, which then allows it to be attainable to people who would come without cars.

John Hanlon (01:01:07):

Ladies and gentlemen, I have to wind up again. Thank you all for coming along a heartbeat.

Speaker 3 (01:01:18):

[Inaudible] I highly

John Hanlon (01:01:19):

Say and realise that Adelaide is actually going through a pretty exciting time. There is lots of things happening. You can see the new face, be careful of the gorilla artists, the Pako, a person who could jump past you somewhere in the street in Adelaide and a person who's going to activate all those spaces again. Can you thank them all very much for their time?

Intro (01:01:46):

This session of the 2013 Adelaide Festival of Ideas was recorded by Radio Adelaide, through the support of the Vast mid library, University of Adelaide, The University of South Australia library and Flinders University library.