

2023 Strong Towns National Gathering

May 30–31, 2023, in Charlotte, NC

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Speakers



Abby Kinney

Abby Kinney is an urban designer and planning consultant at [Multistudio](#), based in Kansas City, Missouri. She lends her expertise to a range of projects including urban design, incremental development consulting, and strategic planning processes. She also has a background working on zoning reform and design-based regulatory approaches. She views her professional experience as a source of constant learning and believes in dedicating her abilities toward the enhancement of urban life and the empowerment of citizens at the local level.

In her own community, Kinney works to advance bottom-up strategies that enhance both private development and the public realm. She founded [Small Developers of KC](#) to focus on building Kansas City's ecosystem of small-scale developers, hosts the popular [Upzoned podcast](#) with Strong Towns, is a member of The Congress for the New Urbanism, and is co-chair of the Young Leaders Group for the Kansas City chapter of the Urban Land Institute.

Session

Take Back Your Streets: Tactical Urbanism in Kansas City, MO



Alan Fisher

Alan Fisher is a content creator from Philadelphia who advocates both for good urbanism and transportation. [Fisher's videos](#) use examples from across the U.S.—with particular focus on the Northeast—to explain different planning concepts and ideas.

Session

How To Use Social Media To Build a Movement and Create Change (Panel)



Amy F. Stelly

Amy Stelly is an artist, designer, and planner. She rose to prominence as a freeway fighter when President Biden cited the Claiborne Expressway in New Orleans as an example of infrastructure that has divided and harmed communities. She is also a preservationist and land use expert who has led some of the city's most powerful advocacy groups.

Stelly is a co-founder of the [Claiborne Avenue Alliance](#), a coalition of residents, business owners, and professionals dedicated to the restoration of the Claiborne Corridor. She is the founder and executive director of the Claiborne Avenue Alliance Design Studio, a non-profit design studio that was born out of the advocacy work of the Alliance. The studio, founded in 2022, is a New Orleans, community-based architectural and urban design firm that is committed to providing access to the languages of design and land use for all.

Stelly has written about land use and zoning, the value of community engagement, and public accountability. She is also a contributor to the recently published [Justice and the Interstates](#). Stelly is an avid swimmer and advocate for water safety and environmental stewardship.

Session

How To Fight the Highway in Your Backyard (Panel)



Angel Castillo

Angel Castillo is an independent marketing consultant, former Ogden City planning commissioner and is running for Ogden City Mayor in Utah this year. She's committed to bottom up, middle out incremental development investment into communities and the misuse of TIF as a 100% financing mechanism is the bane of her existence.

Session

Running for Office as a Strong Towns Advocate (Panel)



Asia Mieleszko

Asia (pronounced "ah-sha") Mieleszko serves as a staff writer for Strong Towns. A dilettante urbanist since adolescence, she's excited to convert a lifetime of ad-hoc volunteerism into a career. Her unconventional background includes directing a Ukrainian folk choir, pioneering synaesthetic performances, photographing festivals, designing websites, teaching, and ghostwriting. She can be found wherever Wi-Fi is reliable, typically along Amtrak's Northeast Corridor.

Session

How To Fight the Highway in Your Backyard (Panel)



Barbara Turner

Barbara’s passion for real estate development began with a childhood dream of living in a beautiful home. At the age of 26, Barbara made that dream a reality by designing and building her own ranch home. The pride and joy she felt when she moved in inspired her to share that feeling with others. Barbara’s son had started a renovation business in Chicago and asked her to join him. While working with her son’s renovation business, Barbara served as the project manager for over 26 properties. Today, Barbara uses her experience and knowledge to provide affordable, high-quality homes for families in South Bend, Indiana. She understands the challenges and complexities of the real estate development process, and she is dedicated to making it easier and more accessible for everyone.

Session

Creating the Ecosystem for Incremental Developers To Succeed



Bernice M. Radle

Bernice is a dreamer and a doer. Radle is a house renovator in Buffalo, New York, and president of [Neighborhood Evolution LLC](#).

Session

Creating the Ecosystem for Incremental Developers To Succeed



Charles Marohn

Charles Marohn—known as “Chuck” to friends and colleagues—is the founder and president of Strong Towns. He is a land use planner and civil engineer with decades of experience. He holds a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning, both from the University of Minnesota.

Marohn is the author of [Strong Towns: A Bottom-Up Revolution to Rebuild American Prosperity](#) (Wiley, 2019) and [Confessions of a Recovering Engineer: Transportation for a Strong Town](#) (Wiley, 2021). He hosts the [Strong Towns Podcast](#) and is a primary writer for Strong Towns’ web content. He has presented Strong Towns concepts in hundreds of cities and towns across North America.

Session

Strong Towns 101



Daniel Herriges

Daniel Herriges serves as editor-in-chief for Strong Towns, writing feature articles and speaking across the country on behalf of the organization. He has been a regular contributor to Strong Towns since 2015 and is also a founding member of the organization. Herriges has a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Minnesota, with a concentration in Housing and Community Development. He grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota, before moving west to the San Francisco Bay Area, later east to Sarasota, Florida, and finally back home to St. Paul where he lives with his wife, daughter, son, and too many pets.

Herriges's obsession with maps began before he could read; a general fascination with cities and how they work was soon to follow. He can often be found exploring out-of-the-way neighborhoods (of his own town or another) on foot or bicycle. His lifelong environmentalism can also be traced all the way back to age 4, when he yelled at his parents for stepping on weeds growing in sidewalk cracks.

Sessions

Changing Minds in Your Community: What Works

Escaping the Housing Trap



Danielle Richard

Born and raised in rural northeast Louisiana, Danielle settled in the nearby, medium-sized city of Shreveport with her husband and Shreveport native, James. Together they own and operate Richard Creative, a design and marketing agency serving organizations in the area for over 15 years. Never content to settle for conventional wisdom, Danielle has spent a lifetime studying humans, how they behave, and imagining how we could change things to work better for everyone

Her philosophy, which she is expounding upon in her forthcoming book, can be summed up as “there are no bad people, just good people trapped in bad systems.” Titled *Humane Era*, the book will suggest the framework for a global collaborative effort to proofread and fine tune all human-made systems to achieve more humane outcomes for everyone. Be the first to learn when the book is available for purchase by signing up for email updates at HumaneEra.org.

Session

How To Fight the Highway in Your Backyard



David S. Cantu

Alderman David S. Cantu is an educator with a master's degree in professional technical education. He has been a resident of San Elizario, Texas, for most of his life (a fourth-generation resident), where he worked for the San Elizario Independent School District as a guest teacher for 12 years (2007–2019).

Cantu was part of the committee to incorporate San Elizario, and the city was established in November 2013. Cantu was elected to office as an alderperson in May 2014, and has served to the present day. He represents citizens at city and county levels, speaking for the people and safeguarding their interests. As Alderman, he heads the Grants Steering Committee, making crucial decisions on which grants to pursue and facilitating the research and work necessary to obtain funding to improve the quality of life for San Elizario residents, while at the same time easing the cost required by the city.

Cantu sits on several boards and advisory committees, volunteers with a number of nonprofits in El Paso County, and is a member of the Adventure Cycling Association.

Session

Running for Office as a Strong Towns Advocate (Panel)



Edward Erfurt

Edward Erfurt is the director of community action at Strong Towns. He is a trained architect and passionate urban designer with over 20 years of public- and private-sector experience focused on the management, design, and successful implementation of development and placemaking projects that enrich the tapestry of place. He believes in community-focused processes that are founded on diverse viewpoints, a concern for equity, and guided through time-tested, traditional town-planning principles and development patterns that result in sustainable growth with the community character embraced by the communities which he serves.

Sessions

How To Start Your Own Crash Analysis Studio

Safe and Productive Streets Walking Tour



Gracen Johnson

Gracen Johnson is a founding member of Strong Towns, a co-founder of the Incremental Development Alliance, and a collaborator with Neighborhood Evolution. She now works as a Senior Specialist at Canada's federal housing agency, CMHC, accelerating ground-level work from across the country that removes barriers to housing supply. In her free time, Gracen makes educational tools that help people approach development in a way that strengthens their communities. She is the creator of STEP Cards and other tools for townmakers at Shophouse Studio. Gracen's favourite way to build community and take in the city is through running groups with her dog by her side.

Session

Creating the Ecosystem for Incremental Developers To Succeed (Panel)



Jane Wilberding

Jane Wilberding, AICP, is a co-founder of the [Parking Reform Network](#), where she leads the research wing of the organization. She has an undergraduate degree in Urban Studies & Business from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, and a Master of Urban Planning and Policy from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She has over a decade of experience in the parking/mobility world, including at the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, DESMAN parking specialists, and Sam Schwartz Engineering. She is currently a Senior Mobility Manager at HNTB in Chicago, living proudly car-free and leading projects throughout the country that reimagine parking/mobility networks to accommodate all modes, abilities, and mindsets.

Session

Unleashing the Benefits of Parking Reform



John Pattison

John Pattison is the community builder for Strong Towns. He is the author of two books, most recently [Slow Church](#) (IVP), which takes inspiration from Slow Food and the other Slow movements to help faith communities reimagine how they live life together in the neighborhood. John and his family live in Silverton, Oregon. You can connect with him on Twitter at [@johnpattison](#).

Session

How To Start a Strong Towns Local Conversation



John Simmerman

John Simmerman, MS, is a veteran public health and health promotion professional with over 30 years of experience helping communities create more people-oriented places and a “Culture of Activity” through proven “All Ages & Abilities” design concepts, and evidence-based behavior change initiatives. Simmerman’s main focus is to inspire others by profiling the people, places, and programs making a difference globally, in the effort to create what he refers to as a “Culture of Activity for All Ages and Abilities” through his multi-platform media efforts, including the [Active Towns channel on YouTube](#); his weekly podcast, [Active Towns: Conversation About Creating a Culture of Activity](#); and public speaking.

Session

How To Use Social Media To Build a Movement and Create Change (Panel)



Joseph Minicozzi

Joseph Minicozzi is an urban planner imagining new ways to think about and visualize land use, urban design, and economics. Minicozzi founded [Urban3](#) to explain and visualize market dynamics created by tax and land use policies. Urban3’s work establishes new conversations across multiple professional sectors, policy makers, and the public to creatively address the challenges of urbanization. Urban3’s extensive studies range geographically over 30 states, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

Minicozzi holds a Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Miami and Master of Architecture and Urban Design from Harvard University. In 2017, Minicozzi was recognized as one of the 100 Most Influential Urbanists of all time.

Sessions

The Dollars and \$ense of City Economics

Uncovering What’s Wrong With the Property Tax Assessment System and Holding Local Governments Accountable



Kevin Klinkenberg

For 25 years, Kevin Klinkenberg has worked as an urban designer, planner, and architect. He has worked in the private, public, and non-profit sectors, and is now proud to lead [Midtown KC Now](#) as executive director. His past experience includes 10 years as a partner and co-founder of 180 Urban Design & Architecture in Kansas City, which worked on projects in 27 states for all manner of public and private clients. While living in Savannah, Georgia, Klinkenberg led the Savannah Development and Renewal Authority as Executive Director for four years. He also worked on his own as K2 Urban Design, with a goal to help public and private agencies make the transition to the next generation of planning and development. From the beginning, Klinkenberg has focused his energies on those who aim for successful walkable and sociable places.

Session

Take Back Your Streets: Tactical Urbanism in Kansas City, MO



Lanier Hagerty

Lanier Hagerty recently graduated Columbia University's M.S. Urban Planning program. She studied urban data analytics and international planning and was selected as a fellow to work with a New York-based affordable housing nonprofit. Prior to graduate school, Lanier lived in Beijing and worked as an investigator with a global corporate research and investigations firm. While in China, she developed an appreciation for the ways in which social and political systems influence our built environment.

Lanier holds an undergraduate degree in culture and politics from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. It was there where she was first exposed to theories of geography, urbanism, and the power of spatial analysis. She has since developed her expertise in GIS and found her passion studying land use, land valuation, and the politics of land tenure.

Lanier was born in South Carolina and has lived in the midwest, northeast, and abroad. She is now happily settled in Asheville.

Session

Uncovering What's Wrong With the Property Tax Assessment System and Holding Local Governments Accountable



LeVette Fuller

LeVette Fuller served on the Shreveport City Council from 2019-2022. She is also a founding member of [Re:Form Shreveport](#), an organization dedicated to bringing citizens together to share ideas and find implementable solutions to improve Shreveport's built environment.

Session

Running for Office as a Strong Towns Advocate (Panel)



Majora Carter

Majora Carter is a real estate developer, urban revitalization strategy consultant, MacArthur Fellow, and Peabody Award-winning broadcaster. She's responsible for the creation of numerous economic development, technology inclusion, and green-infrastructure projects; policies and job training; and placement systems. She is also a lecturer at Princeton University's Keller Center.

Session

Reclaiming Your Community (Keynote Presentation)



Michael Pasternock

Michael Pasternock is the video producer for Strong Towns. After graduating from the University of Missouri, he taught high school English and government in CoMo. Mike and his wife then moved to Arizona, making his side-hustle wedding filmmaking business his full-time job. Mike also worked as chief editor for several prominent YouTubers around the Phoenix area. After discovering Strong Towns and resonating with the message, he realized that his hometown of Chicago was a better fit for his family's lifestyle. He now lives near the lake and loves to document his travels on camera, play board games with friends, and explore the many delicious restaurants near his lively neighborhood.

Session

How To Use Social Media To Build a Movement and Create Change (Panel)



Mike Keen

Recently, Mike Keen has joined Monte Anderson, Bernice Radle, and Jim Kumon to form [Neighborhood Evolution LLC](#), which works with communities across the nation to revitalize their neighborhoods “one sustainable step at a time.”

Session

Creating the Ecosystem for Incremental Developers To Succeed



M. Nolan Gray

M. Nolan Gray is a professional city planner and an expert in urban land-use regulation. He's the author of [Arbitrary Lines: How Zoning Broke the American City and How to Fix It](#). He is currently completing a Ph.D. in urban planning at the University of California, Los Angeles. Gray previously worked on the front lines of zoning as a planner in New York City. He now serves as an Affiliated Scholar with the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, where he advises state and local policymakers on land-use policy. Gray is a contributor to Market Urbanism and a widely published author, with work appearing in outlets such as The Atlantic, Bloomberg Citylab, and The Guardian. He lives in Los Angeles, California and is originally from Lexington, Kentucky. You can connect with him on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

Session

Zoning Broke the City. Here's How To Fix It.



Monte Anderson

Monte Anderson is President of [Options Real Estate Investments Inc.](#), a multi-service real estate firm specializing in developing sustainable neighborhoods in Southern Dallas and Northern Ellis counties. He is also a founding member of [Neighborhood Evolution](#), an organization that specializes in creating ecosystems between cities, developers, and local citizens. He is both an advocate and practitioner of incremental development and is often found speaking and teaching across the country on the cultivating of local neighborhoods. Monte and Options have been recognized by the Dallas Chapter of AIA, North Texas Council of Governments, the American Planning Association, Preservation Dallas, Preservation Texas, and the Greater Dallas Planning Council for their work. Award-winning projects have included Main Station Duncanville, DeSoto Market Place, Tyler Station, the Texas Theatre, Belmont Hotel, Beckley Settlement in Dallas and MidTowne Midlothian.

Session

Creating the Ecosystem for Incremental Developers To Succeed



Norm Van Eeden Petersman

Norm Van Eeden Petersman is the member advocate at Strong Towns. He is an energetic enthusiast for the work that Strong Towns members do around the world. He is a skilled communicator and community builder. He leads [Deltans for People-Oriented Places](#), a Local Conversations group, and is a leader of the [Strong Towns Toastmasters Club](#).

Norm has a Master of Divinity and a Bachelor in Political Studies. He spent 10 years pastoring churches in Canada as a preacher, teacher, and leader. He worked in communications for the second-largest city in British Columbia and carried out stakeholder outreach for Canada's Minister of Health in Ottawa.

Norm has published articles on housing, transportation, faith, and culture and his writing appears regularly on the Strong Towns site. You can connect with him on Twitter at [@normvep](#) or on [LinkedIn](#).

Session

Changing Minds in Your Community: What Works



Rachel Quednau

Rachel Quednau serves as program director for Strong Towns, managing the content team and hosting the [Bottom-Up Revolution podcast](#). Trained in dialogue facilitation and mediation, she is devoted to building understanding across lines of difference. Previously, Rachel worked for several organizations fighting to end homelessness and promote safe, affordable housing at the federal and local levels. Rachel also served as content manager for Strong Towns from 2015–2018. A native Minnesotan and honorary Wisconsinite, Rachel received a Masters in Religion, Ethics, and Politics from Harvard Divinity School and a Certificate in Conflict Transformation from the Boston Theological Interreligious Consortium, both in 2020. She currently lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with her husband Jack and son Marshall. One of her favorite ways to get to know a new city is by going for a walk in it.

Session

Running for Office as a Strong Towns Advocate (Panel)



Ray Delahanty

Ray Delahanty is the creator behind [CityNerd](#), a YouTube channel that explores urbanism, transportation, and all the things that make cities unique. The channel's point of view is strongly influenced by his professional background in transportation planning and traffic analysis. Prior to starting his YouTube channel in 2021, Delahanty's career spanned 15 years as a planner and project manager for consulting firms and public agencies in Portland, Oregon, and he still keeps his AICP up to date, just in case.

Session

How To Use Social Media To Build a Movement and Create Change (Panel)



Tiffany Owens Reed

A graduate of The King's College and former journalist, Tiffany Owens Reed is a New Yorker at heart, currently living in Texas. In addition to writing for Strong Towns and freelancing as a project manager, she reads, writes, and curates content for Cities Decoded, an educational platform designed to help ordinary people understand cities. Explore free resources [here](#) and follow her on Instagram [@citiesdecoded](#).

Session

How To Use Social Media To Build a Movement and Create Change (Panel)



Tony Jordan

Tony Jordan is on a mission to change how people think about parking policy. It started when he read Donald Shoup's *The High Cost of Free Parking* in 2010 and built a coalition of [Portlanders for Parking Reform](#).

A labor organizer and software engineer, Jordan cofounded the [Parking Reform Network](#) in 2019. Its goal is to help people everywhere understand the impact of parking policy on climate change, equity, housing, and traffic. Jordan now leads PRN's team of self-proclaimed parking nerds, working closely with its board of directors and advisory board.

Session

Unleashing the Benefits of Parking Reform

Sessions

Reclaiming Your Community (Keynote Presentation)

Majora is quoted on the walls of the Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture, “You don’t have to move out of your neighborhood to live in a better one.” That sentiment is the focus of this keynote, which will explore how we can address the problem of persistent poverty in low-status communities differently, and slow down the brain-drain that cripples local economic progress. Just like successful companies have talent-retention strategies, Majora Carter argues that these communities need to do the same. Carter shows how brain drain cripples low-status communities and maps out a development strategy focused on talent retention to help them break out of economic stagnation.

Speaker: Majora Carter

How To Start a Strong Towns Local Conversation

The Strong Towns movement is committed to a premise that might sound idealistic, but which we’ve found, over and over, to be true: that people getting together to talk about challenges in their cities and towns can lead to meaningful change. Community Builder John Pattison will discuss the growing number of Strong Towns Local Conversations in North America, explain how you can find (or start) one near you, and share some examples of existing Strong Towns groups that are accomplishing bottom-up changes close to home. You can do this, and Strong Towns is here to help.

Speaker: John Pattison

How To Start Your Own Crash Analysis Studio

Strong Towns’ Crash Analysis Studio is an innovative new program that uses the methodology of medical inquests to investigate individual traffic crashes and recommend specific design changes to prevent their recurrence. You’ll hear from Director of Community Action Edward Erfurt about how to start a Crash Analysis Studio in your own community. Edward will outline the key elements to organize a qualified panel and orchestrate a successful crash session, as well as share some lessons we have learned during the program, so far.

Speaker: Edward Erfurt

How To Use Social Media To Build a Movement and Create Change (Panel)

From safer streets to incremental housing to responsive local government, Strong Towns advocacy covers a wide range of issues with unique constituencies. This expert panel, hosted by Strong Towns Video Producer Mike Pasternock, features innovative and popular creators sharing their experiences reaching people using video, social media, podcasts, and other forms of communication. You’ll learn how to get started on content creation, with pro tips to leverage various platforms and content types to reach new audiences receptive to the Strong Towns message.

Speakers: Tiffany Owens Reed (columnist), John Simmerman (Active Towns), Ray Delahanty (CityNerd), and Alan Fisher (YouTuber). Moderated by Mike Pasternock.

Creating the Ecosystem for Incremental Developers To Succeed

The secret to a great city, town, or neighborhood is that it is shaped by many hands, yet many of our places have faced stagnation and decline for decades. When reinvestment eventually comes, it is implemented by large-scale developers, often from outside the community. A healthy incremental development ecosystem is one where locals own, implement, and benefit from reinvestment in their community. Neighborhood Evolution is a new organization helping to ready, steady, and nurture cities and incremental developers. This panel will feature the founders of Neighborhood Evolution, who are all developers in their own right with decades of experience and wisdom. The conversation will particularly focus on the story of South Bend, Indiana, which has seen a powerful transformation over the last several years as a result of incremental development efforts.

Speakers: Monte Anderson, Mike Keen, Barbara Turner, and Bernice M. Radle. Moderated by Gracen Johnson.

Strong Towns 101

Why are so many cities and towns across North America going broke? Our roads are deteriorating. Our governments are in debt. No matter how much we increase them, our taxes aren't enough to fix it all. And no one seems to be able to agree on how we got here—much less how to change the course. This isn't just about numbers on a budget. This is about the fate of the communities we love most, and the real people that live there. This is about how to give our citizens, today and tomorrow, a chance at the future they deserve. If we want American cities to be strong and resilient, we need to change everything about the way we plan and build our places. In this core Strong Towns presentation, Charles Marohn will explain, in plain language, how so many American cities have found themselves in decline after decades of "growth." And then he'll show you a revolutionary way forward that could create enduring prosperity—if we just have the courage to change our minds.

Speaker: Charles Marohn

The Dollars and \$ense of City Economics

You love your community, but all that love hasn't translated to a functional budget and a financially sustainable future. Urban3 takes a different approach to land value economics, property and retail tax analysis, and community design, empowering communities with new insights into their own data. In this core Urban3 talk, Principal Joe Minicozzi provides visualizations of economic productivity that enable better understanding of the economic potency and efficiency of development choices. He'll begin to demystify tax codes, government jargon, and municipal finance data, to allow you to more clearly understand the economic impact of development.

Speaker: Joseph Minicozzi

Zoning Broke the City. Here's How To Fix It.

One set of policies has burdened cities with debilitating housing shortages, stunted growth and innovation, persistent racial and economic segregation, and car-dependent development. Nolan Gray, author of the book *Arbitrary Lines*, will spotlight the problems with American zoning and propose a better path forward. You'll learn the tangled history of zoning, how it's been deployed, and why it stymies North American cities from addressing many of their problems. Gray will discuss short- and long-term solutions, and you'll learn the many benefits you can unleash if you can get zoning changed in your town.

Speaker: M. Nolan Gray

Unleashing the Benefits of Parking Reform

Costly parking mandates are required for housing and commercial uses in many North American cities and towns. These arbitrary requirements prevent small businesses from opening and homes from being built; they fill our cities with wasteful, empty space; and they drain the financial productivity of our neighborhoods. But the tide is changing. Tony Jordan and Jane Wilberding of the Parking Reform Network will explain the adverse effects of parking mandates, celebrate the substantial momentum for reforming them, and teach you how to organize and build a coalition for parking reforms in your city.

Speakers: Tony Jordan and Jane Wilberding (Parking Reform Network)

How To Fight the Highway in Your Backyard (Panel)

Highway expansion is wasteful and destructive. But what can you do to fight it when such a project comes to your community? Hear from advocates on the front lines taking on the powerful network of highway-building interests in a panel discussion with members of the 4-Corners Coalition for Transportation Planning Reform in Louisiana, a unique regional group of advocates who have banded together around shared Strong Towns goals of ending highway expansion and creating safer streets.

Speakers: Amy F. Stelly and Danielle Richard. Moderated by Asia Mieleszko.

Changing Minds in Your Community: What Works

How do you go about sharing ideas that are new or provocative to a lot of people in your community, in a way that ensures they'll actually listen and maybe even shift their perspective? Daniel Herriges and Norm Van Eeden Petersman will host an interactive training session for local advocates focusing on ways to maximize the persuasiveness of your presentations of Strong Towns ideas. You'll learn how to take part in community discussions in ways that spark meaningful change while steering clear of common, politically charged pitfalls.

Speakers: Daniel Herriges and Norm Van Eeden Petersman

Escaping the Housing Trap

Housing prices are at near-record highs, and millions of Americans are housing insecure in one form or another. The roots of today's housing crisis lie in a basic tension: Can real estate be both an investment vehicle and an economic engine, and a source of necessary shelter for all? What policy and cultural changes will it take to get to a housing market that is broadly affordable and responsive to local needs?

Speaker: Daniel Herriges

Take Back Your Streets: Tactical Urbanism in Kansas City, MO

What's the smallest, easiest step you can take to make your community safer and more prosperous? Often, it's about making simple changes to the street you live on, through tactical urbanism. From traffic cones to curb extensions to the many uses of paint, urban planners Abby Kinney and Kevin Klinkenberg will show you how they're trying to transform Kansas City one incremental step at a time. You'll learn how to identify, design, and implement small-scale changes that can make a big difference in your neighborhood.

Speakers: Abby Kinney and Kevin Klinkenberg

Uncovering What's Wrong With the Property Tax Assessment System and Holding Local Governments Accountable

The system we use to determine property taxes is broken. Sloppy math and systemic accounting issues are giving the richest a discount on property taxes, and leading to overcharges on the less wealthy. Not only is this unjust, but it's also straining town and city budgets. You'll hear from Joe Minicozzi and Lanier Hagerty of Urban3 about the Just Accounting initiative, which has been analyzing property taxes in Western North Carolina and finding glaring inequities in the assessment process. Learn what you need to know to do the math and challenge the system in your community. This session will present the final report that concludes an 18-month research and advocacy process spearheaded by Urban3, Strong Towns, the Racial Justice Coalition of Asheville, and the University of North Carolina Asheville's Department of Health and Wellness, with funding from the Dogwood Health Trust.

Speakers: Joseph Minicozzi and Lanier Hagerty (Urban3)

Safe and Productive Streets Walking Tour

This session is sponsored by Urban Innovators. One of the best ways to observe what's working, and what needs work, in your community is to get out and walk the streets. In this session, you'll do exactly that with Strong Towns Director of Community Action Edward Erfurt in the Charlotte neighborhood surrounding the convention hotel. Tapping into his expertise as an architect and urban designer, Edward will point out places where design changes could make streets safer and more economically productive.

Speaker: Edward Erfurt

Running for Office as a Strong Towns Advocate (Panel)

Many Strong Towns members start with a simple question: What can I do to make my city or town better? For some, that journey leads all the way to elected office. You'll hear from current, former, and prospective office holders from different-sized communities across the U.S. about their paths to enter government, their challenges and frustrations, and some success stories of putting Strong Towns principles into action.

Speakers: Angel Castillo, LeVette Fuller, and David S. Cantu. Moderated by Rachel Quednau.