

**Felix Poon: Just a heads up, there are a few swears in this episode.**

**Nate Hegyi: A couple of years ago, Effie Kong was walking on the sidewalk with her little sister. They were in Somerville, Massachusetts, a city just north of Boston.**

*Effie Kong: It was a pretty lively night...you know, February, but it was not super frigid, and it actually felt, like, quite festive and alive. So we were both in good spirits.*

**Nate Hegyi: And then, Effie and her sister went to cross the street.**

*Effie Kong: we actually tried to cross once and I pulled her back and I was like, Oh, wait, let's wait until the way is clear.*

**Nate Hegyi: (quickly as a parenthetical) By the way Effie's sister is much younger. She was just twelve years old at the time.**

*Effie Kong: And then I told her a joke and she was laughing, and then as we were still in the wake of that joke, we were crossing the street.*

[high pitch "slow motion" tone in]

**Nate Hegyi: and then, they were hit...by a car**

*Effie Kong: time slows down*

[distant sounds of shock]

*I almost have a shot for shot memory...like if you were to look at a film up to the light.*

*My first thought was, did I just get hit by a car?*

*And then my second thought was I couldn't have just gotten hit by a car. This doesn't happen.*

*And then my third thought was, is this guy going to stop?*

*Effie Kong: And then he slams on the brake. I get whipped down. And I fully face planted on the pavement.*

[high pitch "slow motion" tone out]

[sfx of hitting pavement?]

[proximate sounds of shock]

*Effie Kong: I took account of how I was feeling and was like, I can't get up. Like I, I feel weak....I feel really weak.*

**Nate Hegyi: The ambulance came, and took Effie to the hospital. Her little sister was okay. Effie on the other hand had a brain bruise. They monitored her to make sure it wasn't more serious, and then they discharged her.**

**But for an entire year, Effie suffered a kind of a brain fog... she could barely even remember her own phone number sometimes. And then even after recovering from that, the emotional trauma stuck with her.**

*Effie Kong: if I'm just crossing the street with anyone that I know, I will hold on to them.*

*I think it just lives in you of just like, cars will run you down,*

**Nate Hegyi: Every year in the US, there are well over 3 million people injured by car crashes, and tens of thousands die.**

**This is a problem that electric vehicles won't solve. In fact, studies show that pedestrians and bicyclists may be more likely to die when hit by EVs, because they're heavier and quieter than gas cars.**

[THEME FADE IN]

**Nate Hegyi: And because safety is one of the issues that stops people from driving less... Some people are saying that electric cars aren't just part of the solution...**

**They're also part of the problem.**

**<<NUTGRAF>>**

**Nate Hegyi: I'm Nate Hegyi, and this is The race to net zero: building a car-free future from Outside/In.**

**In order to meet climate goals, we need to decarbonize the transportation sector. So we're spending billions on building more EV charging stations, and mining massive amounts of metal.**

**But what if replacing every gas car with an electric one isn't our only, or even the best path, to net zero?**

**In this episode, producer Felix Poon is taking us to Boston, and Seattle – to try and understand the barriers to car-free or car-lite cities, and what people are doing to break them down.**

**[THEME MUX FADE]**

**<<FIRST HALF>>**

**Nate Hegyi: So, Felix, Effie is a friend of yours, right?**

**Felix Poon: Yeah, and after I heard her story I was curious to know, like, who's to blame. Not just for Effie's accident, but for the hundreds of people hit by cars every year in Boston.**

**So I talked to this guy.**

*Jascha Franklin-Hodges: Yeah. So I'm Jascha Franklin-Hodges. I'm the chief of streets for the city of Boston.*

**Felix Poon: And by the way, I asked Jascha what he thought about electric vehicles. And actually, he and his husband just got one last year, and on the first day his husband drove it...**

*Jascha Franklin-Hodges: we were having dinner that night. And he said to me, you know, a lot more people are going to die when everyone is driving an EV. And I was like, What do you mean by that? And*

*he said: it is so fast. And it just it feels like a car designed to make you speed.*

**Felix Poon: So, a big part of Jascha's job is to try to slow cars down. Like, According to the [World Health Organization, slowing cars down by just 5% can lower crash fatalities by up to 30%](#).**

*Jascha Franklin-Hodges: cars are dangerous... you know, you have vehicles weighing thousands of pounds that are moving feet from people who have no metal shells, no airbags, no seatbelts.*

**Nate Hegyi: Well yeah, when you put it that way.**

**Felix Poon: But how else are you gonna put it? That's exactly what driving is.**

**which is why a lot of people feel safer inside of a car, than they do outside of one. Take my friend Effie for example, she takes ride shares everywhere.**

*Felix Poon: Do you Lyft more or do you take public transit more?*

*Effie Kong: I Lyft more, she says with a dose of shame.*

*Felix Poon: Why? What's. What's behind the shame?*

*Effie Kong: It's just not very green. It goes against my feelings of wanting to do my part.*

**Nate Hegyi:** Okay so if we want people to drive less, they have to feel safer getting around outside of cars.

**Felix Poon:** Right. But here's the thing...EVs...yeah they're fast, so they might make our streets more dangerous, but Jascha says the real barrier to slowing cars down is the way we built our country's infrastructure.

*[The American Road clip](#): Every car on the American road, is a sign of our progress toward a better way of life.*

Jascha says it's not really the driver's fault for speeding. it's not even the posted speed limit either. It's the way we've designed our roads that tell us how fast to drive.

*[Futurama 1939 World Fair clip](#): with its 7 lanes accommodating traffic at designated speeds of 50, 75, and 100 miles an hour, is engineered for easy grades, and for speed with safety*

[mux in]

**Felix Poon:** So I should mention that street safety...it's definitely important for small towns and rural areas too.

**But ...**we're mostly looking at cities in this episode, just because there's more opportunities for going car-free when you've got urban density.

**Nate Hegyi:** Right like, for you in Boston, you've probably got more options right?

**Felix Poon:** Yeah, and a lot of cities across the country are redesigning their streets – they’re undoing all that car-centric infrastructure to make things more walk-, bike-, and transit- friendly.

**Felix Poon:** And transit geeks have all sorts of names for this, like “traffic calming measures” and “complete streets.”

*Jascha Franklin-Hodges: so that means more bus lanes, better sidewalks, safer, slower streets that people feel comfortable walking on or letting their kids walk on....*

**Nate Hegyi:** I mean that sounds actually kinda nice. Right? Like, fewer lanes for cars, bigger sidewalks, places to eat.

**Felix Poon:** Well it does depend on who you ask. It’s not just car lanes but parking spots get taken, and businesses are like, without parking spaces people won’t be able to park here and shop at my business, So that’s a big pushback I’ve seen in my reporting.

**Nate Hegyi:** you might lose some customers coming by car, but then you might gain people who are walking or biking there.

**Felix Poon:** Yeah, and studies have shown that businesses overestimate how many of their customers come by car. Plus...people who come by walking or biking usually spend more time in the area than people who drive there.<sup>1</sup>

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<https://www.fastcompany.com/3067515/why-local-businesses-shouldnt-worry-about-eliminating-on-street-parking>  
<https://www.cambridgebikesafety.org/2021/09/22/bike-lanes-and-local-business-the-economic-impact/>

**Nate Hegyi:** Okay but going back to the car lanes, I guess another thing I could see people getting frustrated about...wouldn't it maybe make for worse traffic? Um...I guess, maybe is that the point? Make driving more inconvenient?

**Felix Poon:** Yeah some transit activists would argue that *this is* the point: if it saves even 1 person's life then it's worth it even if drivers' commutes take longer.

But taking away streets for cars can actually even *cut down on traffic*.

Like, in 2009 when New York City closed off Broadway in Times Square... pedestrian injuries dropped<sup>2</sup>, but get this, traffic actually moved 7 percent faster, based on GPS data from yellow cabs.

**Nate Hegyi:** Huh, why is that?

**Felix Poon:** because the intersection got simplified. Broadway is a diagonal street, so instead of 3 flows of traffic, there were only 2, so drivers didn't have to wait as long at the traffic light.

**Nate Hegyi:** Okay, so slower cars means safer streets, fewer fatalities – AND people like Effie would feel safe enough to walk or take public transit.

**Felix Poon:** Or to bike. [According to a 2022 survey](#), 50 percent of Boston residents said they would bike

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<sup>2</sup> Streetfight p. 102



more in the city if there was more biking infrastructure.

[MUX SWELL]

**Nate Hegyi:** Okay so safety is a big factor. But the other big factor here is public transit itself...like if it's not fast enough, reliable enough...it doesn't matter how safe it is, people aren't going to use it

**Felix Poon:** Right, and this is why I think Boston is a great case study. I mean, I live here, and I know Bostonians are ready to drive less. They've been ready.

*LaShea Johnson: I would totally support using my car less often*

**Felix Poon:** And I think this Boston resident I spoke to last summer named LaShea Johnson, put it best.

*LaShea Johnson: you can quote me too, I hate driving in this city. So, yeah.*

*Felix Poon: Say more about that, why do you hate driving here?*

*LaShea Johnson: Have you driven in this city? Like...okay then you know my frustration. Everyone here drives...*

*Friend: but the listeners might not...*

*LaShea Johnson: Oh, you're right, sorry.*

**Felix Poon: Basically Nate, driving in Boston is a shitshow.**

**I get that driving in any city is stressful, but Boston is in a league of its own, the streets are super narrow, there's no parking, none of the roads make sense because they're not in a grid, they're all crooked because they're basically paved-over cow paths from back in the day.**

**Felix Poon: But here's the thing...**

*LaShea Johnson: Driving into Downtown Boston it's not fun. I make that commute more often these days because of the Orange line mishaps and everything.*

**People are ready, to ditch their cars...but buses and trains...they're kind of a shit show too!**

**Felix Poon: Last year [the state's transit agency came under federal investigation](#) after a bunch of high profile mishaps including [a man being dragged to his death](#). And then during the investigation a train even burst into flames when it was crossing a bridge over the river.<sup>3</sup>**

**Nate Hegyi: Oh man, I remember hearing about that on the news!**

*News anchor: Passengers telling terrifying stories from this fire on the orange line. Passengers broke windows to get out of that train, one even jumped into the water. WBZ's Anna...*

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<sup>3</sup> This [WBUR timeline of mishaps](#) could be good for social media

**Nate Hegyi: That's wild!**

**Felix Poon: Yeah. So the state has started addressing the staffing and safety issues that the investigation called out. But even when the system is working at its best, a lot of people drive because, depending on where you're going, it's just faster.**

**Like if I want to visit a friend in Somerville, one city over, it takes me 30 minutes by car.**

**Felix Poon: But if I want to take the train, I have to go into downtown Boston, and then transfer to another train to take me out to Somerville. And so that's twice as long.**

**Nate Hegyi: So are there any plans to grow the system then?**

**Felix Poon: [Technically yes](#), but it's not much when you compare it to how much is spent on repairs and updates.<sup>4</sup> And, there's a lot of repairing to do, because like a lot of cities on the East Coast, Boston's subway system, is ooollld. It [just had its 100 and 25 year anniversary](#)<sup>5</sup>.**

**This thing is as old as [zippers](#), and [radios](#).**

**Nate Hegyi: Oh wow I didn't know it was that old.**

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<sup>4</sup> According to [this report](#) there are 2 expansion projects out of the top 15 capital investment projects, making up about 20% of the funds spent

<sup>5</sup> Good social media op

**And a big part of the problem has to do with taxes. Not to over-simplify the issue, but public transit is funded in large part by taxpayers across the state of Massachusetts, they don't want any more tax hikes to pay for a system that mostly benefits the people of Boston.**

*Jascha Franklin-Hodges: We're not even having a serious conversation about major new rail lines.*

**Felix Poon: This is Jascha Franklin-Hodges again, Chief of Streets in Boston.**

**[MUX IN]**

*Jascha Franklin-Hodges: There are places in the US that are doing this right Los Angeles, Seattle right? These are cities that are investing year over year on a consistent trajectory to build a more robust and a more complete transit system.*

*We're not having those conversations. The questions we're the conversations we're having is, you know, why does it keep getting worse, Right? How can we stop the bleeding? Why is my train on fire?*

**Nate Hegyi: So what are these west coast cities doing differently? Like, what are they getting right?**

**Felix Poon: Well, I took a trip to Seattle to find out.**

*Alex Lew: Well we could sit up at the front if you really wanted to.*

*Passenger: Best seats in the house.*

*Alex Lew: I love these double decker buses, they're so cool*

**Nate Hegyi: That's after a break, but first, if you live in a place with public transit, do you take it? Is it any good?**

**Or is it better to have a car to get around? What would it take for you to ditch your car?**

**We've already heard from some folks, like Louis in Detroit, Michigan, who wishes things were different where he lives.**

*Louis: So, I hate having a car, but the city I live in really is designed exclusively for cars, with a million highways crisscrossing the downtown area and making it really impossible to walk from one neighborhood to the next.*

*So I hate it, so much. But at the end of the day, the world isn't really set up, or at least my city isn't really set up for living in any other way than having a car.*

**Nate Hegyi: And Molly from Melbourne (MEL-burn), Australia, who wonders if the focus on EVs will distract us from better city design.**

*Molly: I worry that suddenly we'll go...oh electric vehicles are here, so therefore we don't have to worry about the actual impact of roads and urban*

*design and making cities more friendly to active transport rather than cars, even if it's an electric car.*

**Nate Hegyi:** So, send us your thoughts at [outsidein@nhpr.org](mailto:outsidein@nhpr.org), or give us a call and leave a voicemail at 844-GO-OTTER.

**We'll be back after this break.**

<<Midroll Break>>

**Nate Hegyi:** Welcome back to Outside/In, I'm Nate Hegyi, here with producer Felix Poon, who was just about to take us from Boston, to Seattle.

*[Seattle street sounds]*

**Felix Poon:** So to be fair, Seattle is still a pretty car-dependent city. [People own almost twice as many cars in Seattle per capita than they do in Boston.](#)

**But between the two cities, Seattle is the one expanding its transit system in a BIG way. So, I went there to see that expansion for myself.**

*Man 1: We have a good bus system*

*Woman 1: It's very very good.*

*Man 2: The buses go quite...metro transit goes quite far*

**Nate Hegyi:** Can I just say how rare it is for anyone to say anything good about public buses?

**Felix Poon:** Yeah!

And for now, public transit in Seattle is mostly the bus system, which as we heard is pretty decent. [The city has a commitment to make sure you're not waiting longer than 10 minutes for a bus.](#) In Boston, I've waited 30 or 40 minutes for buses before.

**Nate Hegyi: Seriously? That's long!**

**Felix Poon: Yeah, it was enough for me to swear off of taking buses in Boston again.**

**Nate Hegyi: I don't blame you!**

**As for Seattle's subway system, they opened their [first light rail line not too long ago, in 2009.](#)**

**That means it doesn't cover as much ground today – but the trains and the stations... are newer, and nicer.**

*Train: Now entering University Street. Doors to my right.*

*[train hum sound]*

**Nate: It sounds like a spaceship**

**Felix Poon: Yeah, and these don't catch on fire.**

**Nate Hegyi: Ooh, there's the Boston joke.**

*[bus hum sounds]*

**One of the first things I did in Seattle was take a ride on a double decker bus on a highway leaving Seattle,**

*Alex Lew: I'm glad we ended up. On a double decker. You could actually see like all the stuff.*

**I could see miles and miles of elevated- light rail tracks under construction.**

*Felix Poon: The further we go, the less constructed it looks, so it's like you see the progress.*

**Now if all goes according to plan, Seattle's light rail system will be almost double the size of Boston's subway system by mid-century. It's currently the largest expansion of urban rail in the country.**

**[MUX BEAT]**

**And a huge thing that makes it all possible? Taxes. To help explain, I talked to Alex Hudson. Alex is the executive director of Transportation Choices in Seattle.**

*Alex Hudson: I used to have to get on it downtown Redmond at the Bear Creek Park and ride. And I would ride the 255 to Kirkland...*

**Alex says her life in transit activism really started back when she was a teenager. She was trying to get from her rural hometown to her job in Seattle, but when she tried making a bus transfer just outside the city, the driver wouldn't let her on. She didn't have the money. So she was stuck... with no debit or credit cards, and no phone back then.**



*Alex Hudson: And so I just remember feeling totally powerless. Like there was nothing I could do to fix this. I remember feeling, like, really ashamed*

**This was a formative experience for Alex. And now, for the last nine years, she's been fighting to maintain and expand Seattle's bus and rail service, and access to it.**

**And let me tell you, it's been an epic battle, full of ballot measures passing and failing, appeals and court cases, and something called a P- T- B- A-**

*Alex Hudson: A P-T-B-A. Okay. Felix we're getting into like the wonky shit here. So there's a lot of different ways that public transit is funded and it kind of breaks down into sort of two general categories, it's either the function of an existing government.*

**An existing government like King County – which Seattle is a *part of*, but the majority of King County is suburban and rural, so most county residents have rarely, if ever, taken transit.**

**So if there's a vote in King County to increase taxes for bus service, you've got the majority of voters thinking... wait, why should I pay for Seattle's buses?**

**And in the past, ballot measures like that have failed.**

*Alex Hudson: So I think it's neither good politics nor good governance to tax people without giving them something.*

**But there's *another* way to raise transit funding.  
Through PTBAs: Public Transportation Benefit Areas:**

*Alex Hudson: So they're their own organizations  
with their own leadership*

**So say you want to create a new rail line to a neighborhood – [if you create a new PTBA, you can have THOSE people who would be served by the new rail line vote](#) – more public transit in exchange for higher taxes.**

**Nate Hegyi: Felix, is this happening outside of Seattle and Washington? Like, what do things look like nationally? Does it break down across red states/blue states, that sort of thing?**

**Felix Poon: Well, [transit measures have actually passed in both blue and red states](#), as long as they're being passed at the local level in *[cities...](#)***

**But at the federal level Republicans wanted more funding for highways, and Democrats wanted more funding for public transit in that [2021 infrastructure bill](#).**

**Nate Hegyi: Right, I mean like Republicans represent more of rural America, where public transit barely exists, and cars are pretty much how you get around.**

**Felix Poon: Right**

**Nate Hegyi: But back to Seattle, what have these tax increases done for transportation there?**

**Felix Poon: So Seattle says access to “frequent” transit means being within a 10-minute walk to bus or train service that comes every 10 minutes or less. And the number of households in Seattle like this went way up – from only 25 percent, to 70 percent in the span of a few years.**

**Plus, Alex just helped pass legislation that kids 18 and under ride for free. That means her own horror story – when she didn’t have enough money for the bus and got stranded – won’t happen to kids today.**

*Alex Hudson: sometimes we'll say, like the places that you can go. Is the things that you can be. And so I love that this is telling more people that you can be more things*

**Felix Poon: Which is why when Alex sees concrete trucks and construction signs for expanded rail – what she sees is a more connected world.**

*Alex Hudson: It's just like hope. It's like we're building hope for people. And I think it's the most beautiful thing in the world.*

**[long mux tail]**

**Felix Poon: So I want to take you to one more place in Seattle... To talk about another type of safety that’s needed in all walkable and bikeable cities.**

**[MUX OUT]**

*Edwin Lindo: It it was, I think in the fall ... So the the sun was shining... There's a lot of trees. the kind of the rays coming through (duck under) and there's beautiful switchbacks*

**Felix Poon: This is Edwin Lindo. And a couple of years ago, Edwin was biking with a friend in an area of Seattle called Mercer Island.**

*strong right turns and then sharp left turns.*

**Felix Poon: And what you should know about Mercer Island is that there's a [popular bike loop](#) there, but also that it's a [pretty affluent area](#).**

*Edwin Lindo: And one day we see... two, two older white men and they were pace lining, so one right behind the other. And we were doing the same. And we we said wo, we're picking up some steam. And Aaron was in front of me. And Aaron shouted "on your left" and we started going around a bit faster and ...*

*And I remember looking to my right. I always look at folks' bikes and see what kind they are...And I then look at the second person and I heard them kind of gargle up this loogie*

*and ... And the first thing he did, he turned to his left and he just spat it at me.*

*And it was running across my shoulder.*

*And I looked back at him and he had this grimace*

[MUX IN]

*My mind froze, I kept pedaling, but my mind froze realizing like, what are you going to do?*

*You're in Mercer Island. It is a overwhelmingly white town. You can stop get in a fight, but you know who's going to go to jail?*

*There's no evidence. There's no nothing. This isn't the fight you're going to pick.*

**And what you should know about Edwin is [he's a Critical Race theory scholar](#). So, picking fights against systemic racism is basically his job. And so he and his friend Aaron... they finish the loop and head back to Seattle, and they end up at a coffee shop, reeling from this experience.**

*Edwin Lindo: And in that moment, we're like, you know, ... cycling is hella white. It is so white that there are people who think we don't belong there.*

*Edwin Lindo: cause we said we got to do something. I was like, Aaron, we can't keep going out there and expect bad things not to happen. And that was just one example.*

**Felix Poon: So...Edwin and his friend Aaron, they organized the Northstar cycling club, so that people of color could have a bigger space in the biking community.**

**And I think this story, it tells you a lot about how safety, you know the safety to walk and bike without**

being hit by a car is one thing, but it's also the safety to not be harassed.

And when I talked to women, queer people, trans people, people of color...when they talked about how they get around, a lot of them said they feel vulnerable taking transit.

Nate Hegyi: right, because, because you know, you are so much more exposed when you're not inside a car. Like, literally exposed.

Felix Poon: So Northstar is fighting to make cycling feel safer and more welcoming for people of color. But sometimes, focusing on safety from racism can seem at odds with safety from cars - even if that's not necessarily the case.

So for example, there's the issue of bike helmets.

Bike helmets lower your risk of head trauma if you get hit by a car.

But...

*Edwin Lindo: How did we go from that to then saying now we're going to over criminalize communities that are black and brown*

[MUX]

So according to one report, [Black cyclists in Seattle were nearly 4 times more likely to get a ticket for not wearing a helmet than white cyclists.](#)<sup>6</sup>

And some of the people getting ticketed were kids.<sup>7</sup>

*Edwin Lindo: why are we giving \$140 tickets to 14 year olds? Why are they getting tickets at all right.*

*Edwin Lindo: Where they get the money? Or are we taking their family? And so that becomes an even more interesting question, as now we're ticketing communities and the children are the proxy.*

**Felix Poon: So...[some bike activists argue that they wouldn't need helmets if streets](#) were designed to be safer for bikers.**

**But given the reality, we know [bike helmets do save lives](#).**

And yet...according to Edwin, **enforcing this bike helmet law...was only an excuse to over-police Black and brown communities...and it only served to discourage these communities from biking at all.**

So Northstar Cycling Club and other groups...they **pushed the Seattle City Council to repeal the law.**

**And the city council agreed...[they repealed it – and simultaneously decided to fund the distribution of](#)**

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<sup>6</sup> See also: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/18/us/seattle-bicycle-helmet.html>

<sup>7</sup> I can't find it anymore, but I recall seeing testimony from a Black woman saying her son was ticketed by police, and was so traumatized that he never wanted to bike again.

**[free helmets](#), something that Edwin had been advocating for all along.**

*Edwin Lindo: So it's it's been cool to see the progress on that and how a small group like Northstar can can have an impact just because we share a very clear racial analysis of of how things could be.*

**[MUX — long transition]**

**Nate: we've heard from people trying to make it easier to bike, and take public transit in American cities. That's all well and good. But like...is it enough? Even if they succeed, these cities are no Amsterdam.**

**Felix Poon: But Amsterdam is actually an informative example, because it wasn't always the biking capital of the world. They were once heading toward a car-centric infrastructure too, they only became a biking paradise because they chose that path, [by passing bike-friendly policy in the 1970s](#).**

**Nate Hegyi: I hear that, but...this is still America after all, I mean like, we're the home of Ford, we invented car-culture. You know? Like, it is embedded in us. And like we talked about in the last episode, people are really resistant to change here.**

**Felix Poon: I mean, it makes sense to be skeptical.**

*Thea Riofrancos: it's a dramatic change, right? It would require a lot of dramatic changes that might be at the. Edges of what's politically. Possible in the US. It might be beyond those edges.*



**Felix Poon:** This is Thea Riofrancos, a researcher who studies **resource extraction** and **climate change**.

**Felix Poon:** And Thea created a *model* where we can make it to net zero with **90% less lithium** than other models say we need ***if we make*** electric car batteries smaller, if we recycled them, and ***if we drove ... less***.

**Nate Hegyi:** Right, it's a different, or at least, parallel path to meet our climate goals that's arguably better for the environment...and as we talked about in this episode, better for safety and saving lives.

**Felix Poon:** And – the thing about models

*Thea Riofrancos: is that models shape. The future.*

**Felix Poon:** Models are used by policymakers to invest in the future we want. That's why we have to ask ourselves... what future ***do*** we want?

When we scrap our gas cars, do we want to mine as much lithium as possible to replace every one of them with an electric car?

Or do we want to scrap cars more generally? And build better transit and safer streets so we can drive less?

**Nate Hegyi:** [optional reaction?]

**Felix Poon:** For the people I talked to in this episode, EVs can be part of the solution, but they have serious limits.

**LaShea Johnson:** *you're replacing cars that run on gasoline with cars that are electric*

**Felix Poon:** **LaShea Johnson.**

*but you're still going to be sitting in traffic. You're still going to have parking problems*

**Alex Hudson:** *It still supports the kind of land use and sprawl that contributes to deforestation and other kinds of land degradation.*

**Felix Poon:** **Alex Hudson.**

**Jascha Franklin-Hodges:** *our boundaries of our city are completely locked.*

**Felix Poon:** **Jascha Franklin-Hodges.**

*We cannot grow outward. We cannot make streets wider. We do not have a place for more cars to drive.*

**And, more importantly they say, we really don't have a choice.**

*We are looking down the barrel of a gun with global climate change.*

**[THEME MUX IN]**

*And so that to me is the other part of the answer to why we have to do this is...*

*I want my kids and my grandkids to have a habitable planet. And I don't actually believe that that's possible if we don't start to rethink how we get around.*

**[THEME MUX SWELL]**

**Nate Hegyi: Alright, so that's the end of this episode, but it is of course not the end of the conversation. We want to know what you think?**

**What do you need to see change in your neighborhood to get around without a car?**

**Felix Poon: Recognizing of course that some of you might live in places where everything is pretty spread out and driving is the only option.**

**Nate Hegyi: Right, although something we've been talking about is the growing hype around electric bikes. There's a real opportunity for e-bikes and getting around some towns and suburbs with them if there were more bike lanes to make it a safer option.**

**Felix Poon: Right, and that's just one example. There's also the wonky world of zoning – like can we make it more commonplace to have grocery stores in walking distance of homes, so you don't have to get in your car every time you need to run out for milk or eggs?**

**Nate Hegyi: Yeah, get creative! Share your ideas! Send us your voice memos. And we might include your thoughts in a future episode or in our newsletter.**

**Nate Hegyi: You can email us at Outside In at NHPR dot org. Or hit us up on Twitter or Instagram, we're at Outside In Radio.**

**<<CREDITS>>**

**Nate Hegyi: This episode was produced by Felix Poon and edited by Taylor Quimby, with help from me, Nate Hegyi, Justine Paradis, Jessica Hunt, Mara Haplamazian, and our executive producer is Rebecca Lavoie.**

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**Nate Hegyi: Music in this episode came from Roy Edwin Williams, and Blue Dot Sessions.**

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