



Streets used to be designed for people.

1910s

1920s

1930s 1940s 1950s 1960s 1970s 1980s 1990s 2000s 2010s

Sadly, during the last 100 years, people have become an afterthought.



It's time for change.





**JENNIFER TOOLE,**  
AICP, ASLA  
*President*

“ **OUR SKILL AND OUR  
PASSION IS HUMAN-  
CENTERED DESIGN.  
WE CARE ABOUT PEOPLE.** ”

**TOOLE**  
DESIGN

## **Cities across North America are experiencing unprecedented changes in transportation.**

Innovative technology is transforming vehicles and travel options; demographic trends are fundamentally altering people's transportation needs and perceptions; soaring pedestrian and cyclist deaths are demanding a new commitment to safer streets.

Agency staff, elected leaders, and community organizations are struggling to manage the challenges and opportunities brought on by these changes. The conventional Three E's approach of engineering, education, and enforcement no longer provides the guidance or moral compass needed to successfully navigate such disruptive change.



At Toole Design, we are guided by values that transcend this outdated Three E's approach. As we plan, design and build transportation systems that serve everyone, we are solving the challenges we face today and anticipating the needs of the future. We look beyond professional disciplines and across conventional boundaries. We approach every project with the understanding that transportation is not an end in itself but is instead a vital means for attaining human health, happiness, and fulfillment.

# THE NEW E's

The words that inspire and guide us are **ethics**, **equity**, and **empathy**. We use these values to create a more just society, where everyone has safe and efficient access to jobs, services, shops, schools, and family and friends. We're not content to follow warrants, models, and outdated formulas to unquestioningly perpetuate the status quo, and we will not add vehicle capacity and speed with one hand and promise to deliver Vision Zero with the other.

Our skill and our passion is human-centered design, and we are moved by **emotion** to ensure that people of all ages and abilities can joyfully **experience** places built for them. Our concepts start with people's vision of their own community, not what's left over after we've taken care of all the motor vehicle traffic.

There are other words that fit with the "E" theme. We believe the need to tackle **environmental** challenges of climate change, **energy** supply, and pollution is an ethical imperative. The promise of **economic** benefits is an essential element of broader equity conversations. And a commitment to **engagement** is integral to showing genuine empathy in our work.

Ultimately, the E's we choose to guide us reflect core values that break down the barriers between planning, design, and engineering. We embrace these values to change the status quo and to create transportation systems that are safe, efficient, equitable, and sustainable for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

**This is why people work at Toole Design.**

**ETHICS** | **EQUITY** | **EMPATHY**

## WHERE DID THE E's COME FROM?

The Three E's of engineering, education, and enforcement have dominated transportation professionals' thinking since at least 1925. Traffic safety programs have been organized around these disciplines for decades.

This approach may have made sense during the explosive growth in highways and motor vehicle travel that took place in the last century, but today it is proving too rigid and siloed to serve communities that are committed to achieving Vision Zero, redressing historical and structural inequities in our cities, reversing climate change, and improving the quality of life for everyone.



**BILL  
SCHULTHEISS, P.E.**  
*Director of Sustainable Safety*

“ *The transportation design profession must accept increased personal responsibility for the outcomes of our work. It will be challenging, but it is our ethical duty to hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public while we solve mobility challenges for all users of the roadway.* ”

# ETHICS

Engineers have a code of ethics that calls them to “hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public.” Planners and landscape architects have similar ethical standards. Yet our transportation system kills 40,000 people a year in crashes, and it’s responsible for more than a quarter of the greenhouse gas emissions.

Roads and traffic divide communities; limit accessibility; actively discourage walking, bicycling and transit use; and increase noise, stress, air pollution, and health inequalities.

As transportation professionals, we must stop blaming victims, or user error, or someone else for the failings of a physical infrastructure that

prioritizes one class of user over all others, excludes certain populations, and fails to provide the level of safety that we know is possible. We must hold ourselves accountable, live up to our respective ethical standards, and use our technical knowledge and skills to create a public realm fit for all.



**TAMIKA BUTLER, ESQ**  
*Director of Equity & Inclusion;  
Director of Planning, California*

“ *The beauty of our profession is that we have the tools to help people connect and move freely. Yet we often fail to acknowledge that this profession—and those same tools—have been used to keep people apart and stifle mobility. To make transportation equitable, we must commit to addressing historical and present-day inequities as we move together towards mobility justice.* ”

# EQUITY

From redlining to urban renewal to Jim Crow, many communities across North America have long borne unfair burdens because they were different from those in power. These inequities are alive and well today, and they are closely tied to race. Some groups of people have been excluded from the decision-making process that shaped their built environment, and the built environment has in turn cut these groups off from access to opportunity.

Not everyone has equitable access to safe, comfortable, affordable, and healthy transportation choices, and the burden of traffic violence is not shared equally. Equity means distributing resources to people in a just and impartial way. It's not giving everyone the same thing, but rather

giving everyone what they need today while considering how existing power structures have governed resource distribution in the past. As transportation professionals, we must recognize the constant opportunities we have to dismantle—or perpetuate—inequities.



**KRISTEN LOHSE, ASLA**  
Senior Urban Designer

“Empathy—listening to others openly and with compassion—allows us to truly understand people’s needs and set aside our own biases. Empathy is essential to accomplish our work in a way that’s centered on the people who use our transportation systems each day. And that’s the point, right?”

# EMPATHY

It’s easy for planners, designers, and engineers to fall into the trap of assuming everyone thinks the way they do. A commitment to listening to people is an essential part of challenging those assumptions and, in turn, better understanding the perspectives, experiences, and motivations – both emotional and physical – of the people for whom we design.

Empathy is the capacity to see, hear, and feel what another person is experiencing, from within their frame of reference. More than pity or sympathy, which can disconnect us

from people, empathy fuels a better connection with the people we serve. This connection is what inspires the creation of creative, positive, and community-focused solutions.

## A FOCUS ON VALUES

Our exploration of the new E's is helping us confront the limitations of a century-old approach to transportation planning and design that is no longer fit for purpose. The discussion has focused us on values and a human-centered approach to building community; this is what inspires our staff, better serves our clients, and moves our company forward.

We are not stopping there. The values inherent in ethics, equity, and empathy should guide every planner, every urban designer, and every engineer involved in shaping our cities, regardless of where they work. The transportation industry must change if we are to eliminate traffic deaths, build communities that are fair and just, and prevent catastrophic climate change. Toole Design is committed to leading that transformation.





**T'OOLE**  
DESIGN

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