

Public Private Partnership Sustainability with Kimberly Hosken

Introduction ([00:01](#)):

Welcome to Green Building Matters. The original and most popular podcast focused on the green building movement. Your host is Charlie Cichetti, one of the most credentialed experts in the green building industry and one of the few to be honored as a LEED Fellow. Each week, Charlie welcomes a green building professional from around the globe to share their war stories, career advice, and unique insight into how sustainability is shaping the built environment. Settle in, grab a fresh cup of coffee and get ready to find out why Green Building Matters.

Charlie ([00:34](#)):

Welcome to the next episode of the Green Building Matters Podcast. I have a lot of fun because every week I get to interview green building professionals, I've got another one on here today. We've got Kimberly Hoskens. She's coming to us from the Los Angeles area. She's the director of P3 Operations Maintenance. She's had a quite big green building journey. I can't wait to get into her story. Kimberly, thanks for being on the podcast today. Thanks for inviting me. I always say, take us back, where'd you grow up and where'd you go to school?

Charlie ([01:07](#)):

My journey's a little complicated, but I was born in Palo Alto, the youngest of six children because my father worked at Stanford Research Institute. I kind of got my science business interests there, but I consider myself Southern Californian because I moved to Southern California when I was about four. Living by the ocean, learning how to sail in tiny boats and being on the water. The ocean is where I grew up.

Charlie ([01:30](#)):

Beautiful part of the country. Some of those natural influences will come back up. What about your studies and early career path? What you wanted to be when you grew up or how'd you get into your initial work career?

Charlie ([01:59](#)):

I did not have a clue. I actually started working very young. My first job was actually as a docent at the Rio Marine museum and I taught people about the ocean and environment. I was 14 to 16 years old doing that.

Charlie ([02:31](#)):

I moved on to Marine land of the Pacific, which is no longer in existence, but was there one of the original amusement parks. I was in the training department there with the dolphins and the whales and the sea lions. How could life be any better? I was 16 working with whales and dolphins. I thought this is it, but things change. MarineLand had to close for remodeling with 20th century Fox bought them and I had taken some drafting classes in the local area to college. I ended up getting interested in architecture. I wanted to be an architect, got back focused in schools, started taking a lot of math and pursued my architectural dream and went to Arizona State University, but it was not meant to be. Came home on winter break and got in a serious car accident and that was the end of everything for about a year. When I recovered from that, I ended up going to work, hn facilities for an architect I had been working for previously. They put me in the Turner Construction Trailer because there wasn't room for me in the facilities office for about a year. I liked what these guys were doing and it was a time when Turner had decided to hire women. I was one of six women across the country that they took on and I was one of their first female superintendents in high rise construction in Orange County, California.

Charlie ([04:15](#)):

That's a big deal. That's really cool to hear. The podcast is about storytelling. You're off to a great start here. You just were trying to figure it out and certain doors opened. Construction and superintendent, I worked for a Heartbeat general contractor when I got to Georgia Tech. I have a lot of respect in the construction industry and that's very rare to have a female superintendent there. Amazing. How'd you go from that in the construction world to kind of green building consulting, CTE energetics. What happened there?

Kimberly ([04:51](#)):

There's a big gap there. I actually left construction in 1987 and moved to Lake Tahoe and opened a bike shop. I never intended to stay there for 13 years, but I did. I ended up working for Plasser County Public Works and my job was to do the construction management of all the infrastructure and also to run the traffic management program. The goals of those programs were really to help the economy, the tourism, everything else, but they were also focused on air and water quality and what could we do to improve air and water quality of the lake? That's where I got into the environmental side. In 2000 I left Plaster County and

went back to work for Turner Construction, Sacramento on the Cali PA building and that was a green building. Once again, I fell into it a couple of years later, a friend called me up and said, "Hey, this little contractor in LA, looking for someone with environmental experience, they're building the platinum buildings." I took the job and it was TG Construction. We built three LEED Platinum buildings that year, which is kind of unheard of. The turning point was one day I was working on the Autobahn project and I got a call from the office saying, the boss wants you back in the office right now. There's somebody you have to meet. Of course it was completely annoying being pulled off the job site. I got there and they introduced me to Ray Anderson. We sat in the conference room, the three people who were running the three LEED platinum projects and talked to Ray Anderson for three hours. And that's the first time I will use an expression of contagious passion. I had gone back to school to start working on my MBA and I met this person and I just caught it. Hot passion for green building. I was doing green building, but I hadn't fully gotten infected with it yet. I then focused my MBA on what was the return on investment in green building. I had all the data from the three projects. CTG was the consultant on the project. That relationship started and then I went on to CTG for two and a half years. We wrote reference guides. We wrote the LEED exams. We built contracts for training. I have to tell you, I think one of the highlights of my career would have been those early days at CTG sitting around with Art Cohen and Ben Shank and Eric Ring and Heather Rosenberg and talking about LEED. It was early days. What does this point mean? What is the intent of this credit? We would have these brilliant intellectual conversations that I look back at and just think, wow, it was such a privilege to be able to have those conversations with that diverse group and be part of everything that started back .

Charlie ([08:27](#)):

I really didn't get into LEED till about 2006, 2008. For those listening that are newer to LEED, Kimberly was here in those early days, 2000s with the team writing these reference guides. You also were at the US Green Building Council for a little while in the LEED volume program. Another big lift to get LEED mainstream.

Kimberly ([08:52](#)):

That was the second sort of episode of contagious passion. I hated driving to downtown LA, but Rick Fedrizzi was going to speak at one of the events. I said, "Okay, I'm going to go. I listened to him and anybody who's ever heard Rick speak is like, "Okay, how do you not get excited?" I went up to him after he spoke and gave him my card and said, thank you. He gave me his card and a week later I

wrote him a letter and I said, "I want to come to work for you." Three months later, I was in DC as a director at USDA, BBC the new construction. Yes, I spent most of my time there working on the volume program and trying to figure out how to facilitate that. A tremendous experience again when I think when we spoke earlier, I caused a little bit of trouble because I got invited to go to Santiago and meet with John Carlos Rosario at Falabella. Again, now we don't think anything about LEED being utilized in foreign countries, but in 2005 and 2006, this was a big deal. I went down there and we met and saw the amazing work that John Carlo was doing. It was just phenomenal, but there was some controversy over should we explore this? Should we be doing LEED? In other countries, of course, India was talking about it and other countries were, but we hadn't really branched out yet at that time and the growth was phenomenal. We had our hands full in the US, let alone going out to foreign countries.

Charlie ([11:00](#)):

Oh, that's exciting. I didn't know all this. This is fascinating. Any other influences there? You mentioned Rick of course, Ray Anderson. Anyone else you might call a mentor or someone you want to give a shout out to that opened the door for you along the way?

Kimberly ([11:16](#)):

There are so many people. I would have to say that Linda Sorento at the US GBC and Holly Fenderson were certainly supporters of mine and women who inspired me to just keep going. A lot of the people that were working at USGBC were great too. There are too many to name. I had Young Glazer working for me and Nick Shaffer and those people are still people I associate with. I'm so proud of how they grew up when they came and started we're really young people and they've accomplished so much. A lot of people out there gotta be rewarding. It's still a small group, a small network, but it's growing.

Charlie ([12:09](#)):

Connect some more dots in the career journey here at Johnson Controls and then get us to Noresco and current day. Tell us more about the company.

Kimberly ([12:20](#)):

The whole connection with John Carlo and Falabella in Chile became through Johnson Controls, and they offered me an opportunity to come on board. It wasn't what I would have thought I would have done, but what we did there was

continue the education. I knew this was a time when people were competitive about how many LEED accredited professionals they had. Johnson launched this program with myself and Juliet, Pagliaro, Herman, and others who built a training program. I got to train over 3000 people around the world in LEED and get their LEED credential. I was traveling around the world designing charrettes in pyro, in Istanbul, in Dubai, icense. We also had a tool that we built and this was a little bit of a funny story, but one of the things I did at USGBC was I had to write a cease and desist order to Johnson Controls telling them they couldn't (inaudible) LEED speed.

Kimberly ([13:36](#)):

And that was what started the relationship. It's just funny how things turn out. I am talking to this person saying, "No, you can't use the same name. They changed the name and when I came we retooled that tool and it was called Green Compass. I think that this is where I really gotta appreciate the beauty of the LEED check and it's criticized. I was an early critic. I think a lot of us were, but it's really an elegant tool. We built this computer program around this tool, and then I was able to take that out and it was for existing buildings. I switched over, I started moving towards existing buildings with Johnson Controls, and I did about 40 million square feet of sustainability audits using this tool around the world.

Kimberly ([14:32](#)):

It was really great fun. It was also highly educational for me to go to foreign countries to learn about what they were doing in facilities. What were the common things that every facilities manager faces around the world? Money. How do you get a new tiller? How do you implement a green program? I'm hearing all these things and then taking it back and building it into could we give you an energy project, which was really our focus at the time.

Charlie ([15:08](#)):

I love LEED, LEED AB, Ebomb. It's a big part of our carbon goals. Kimberly, it's not just the 2030 in new construction. There's so much to do. Johnson's a good place to do that and the rest go to the existing building. About 3000 people around the world, you got to go to all those coastal cities. That was a pretty good gig. Sounded like a lot of fun and change does happen. I keep hearing that here.

Kimberly ([15:33](#)):

I separated from Johnson at one point, but I continued to work for them as a consultant. What got me to where I am now, which is I got a call from a former colleague that said "We need you to do our LEED certification and it's on a P3b project, which was the Long Beach Courthouse." P3 had to learn this whole new delivery method of buildings. I engaged again with Johnson doing this P3 and LEED certification. What I found was to my delight, "Oh, wow, this is the coolest, most sustainable project delivery method ever." The key with these P3s, is the long-term contract that goes on at the end of the construction project. You've got a 30 or 40 year operations maintenance contract on every single one of these P3. You bring the operations people into the design. In the early days when we were doing LEED at CTG, if we had a charrette, we got a contractor in the room, we were excited that it was integrated design. Now we've got a contractor with the entire design team, the facilities team, the operators and the owner in the room during design talking about the life cycle. I evolved into doing this life cycle component of P3, 30 years. How do you operate it out of energy work for 30 years? That's kind of what I ended up doing. I went back to work for Johnson as an employee on the (inaudible) 2020 project, which is a very green project that I'm sure you're aware of. You've interviewed the head of the university system. I did that for about three and a half years. I joined the rest, which is owned by the carrier corporation to continue P3 work.

Charlie ([17:49](#)):

That is truly integrated teams and that 30 year planning, talking about energy. I'm excited to hear that. I can tell you're enjoying the work. We've connected the dots on the career journey. If you were to look back a little bit, what are a couple of accomplishments that really do stand out?

Charlie ([18:02](#)):

I think the days of building the three platinum buildings is something that stuck with me. I was presenting triple platinum on the return on investment. That was certainly a highlight, but also I would have to say if it comes to favorite projects that Miller Park in Milwaukee and getting a baseball stadium with operable rooms, LEED certified was quite a challenge, and really just a great project. I had such strong help. Molly. McElligott worked for me and did most of the hard work, but together, the building was certified and it was a huge challenge, and very rewarding in the end.

Charlie ([18:50](#)):

Oh, those are great. , \I Know we connect on LEED Fellow basis and you've been doing it a while and the volume program, I just love hearing everything you've got going on here. Let's take a look at maybe the future. What are you reading up on, or what are you excited about with what's coming at us in this green building?

Kimberly ([19:09](#)):

Well, this afternoon I'm interviewing interns for our Fresno State project, which is a central plant project and energy project. I can't honestly tell you that I get really excited about a central plan, but I do get excited about interns. At this point in my career, getting the opportunity to teach interns. To bring interns and bring the next generation and help them get excited about a central plant and why it's important. That's really what I'm looking forward to. We have a huge education component on this project and I think that that's not uncommon for the P3 with the higher ed level and the rest goes, got a great education team. We really have some fun stuff lined up over the future work of P3s. I'm really looking forward to the education component, my career, the rest you gotta do it and it's all good to have the projects. I think the other thing, one of the silver linings of COVID is the opportunity to get mechanical systems upgraded for the first time in a long time. If you're in the existing building space you know that this is a big challenge for people to be able to try to convince their leadership that they need money for new chillers. It is really hard to just fix it. We don't want to spend money on a chiller. I think that that is potentially something that we're going to see more or more about ventilation. I think the health building occupants with ventilation is really a big deal looking forward to that.

Charlie ([21:10](#)):

Healthy building movement, but you're right, it is forcing something we know is the best practice. You really have to do it. Let's talk a little more about you. What would you say is your specialty or gift?

Kimberly ([21:22](#)):

Being able to change and deal with change. I've moved 18 times since I left my host city, and companies or organizations changed, not industries. Went from new construction to existing building, whatever it takes. I think being able to accept change with grace and do what you need to do to move on in the face of things that may not have been in the plan. I would like to think that I'm good at sharing with the younger people how to work on their careers. I have some good examples of what not to do.

Charlie ([22:07](#)):

Wow. That's good. Any of the interns that make the cut, make sure they listen to this podcast. Change, if it could follow up there? Can you give a practical piece of advice? Do you have to accept that it's inevitable? Do you have anything that's helped you as change has happened? Could you give us maybe just one more layer on that one and how to deal with change?

Kimberly ([22:30](#)):

I think you have to, except that each time there's a change, you have to learn new things that you're not an expert at when you change. You might have to go back a little bit and say, "Well, I know this about new construction, but that doesn't mean I know all of what's involved in facilities management." What do I need to learn and be open to all the learning you can get? There are a lot of good people you can learn from trying and identifying those people is that human nature where you fear the unknown. When there's change, we don't know this is going to go. We don't know what we need to learn, and that's going to be more work.

Charlie ([23:14](#)):

Thanks for taking us there. Let's talk about habits of going to symphony routines or rituals and good habits every morning.

Kimberly ([23:19](#)):

I say my 10 grateful predators and write in my journal and try to get some kind of exercise to start the day. Must have everyday behavior.

Charlie ([23:38](#)):

I can tell that if you don't do it those days, you can probably tell the difference. That is your go-to. It's going to work. Thank you for sharing those habits. Kimberly, as we get to know each other more, I'm a fan of a bucket list. Could you share one or two things maybe on your bucket list, travel adventure, maybe you want to write a book?

Kimberly ([23:58](#)):

I've been around the world a few times and I've moved all these times. My bucket list might be a little different, I'm looking forward to staying put. I'd like to become more part of my local community. I would like to get married. That may sound a little odd, but I've just been on the move. It's been really hard to feel connected to

the community. I'm looking forward to that and more. We're starting to focus a little more on a couple charities I'm interested in and I do want to get better at my Tai Chi.

Charlie ([24:40](#)):

Oh, fantastic. Those I have interviewed that have been well-traveled want to be closer to home and community. Those that have been here that haven't traveled much, you're not alone there. I think it comes up more than you would think here on the podcast. How about books? Is there a good book you might recommend to the podcast?

Kimberly ([25:00](#)):

I think that the book I recommend right now is The checklist manifesto by Atul Gawande, really fun to read for anybody who's working in LEED and dealing with our tech list. I think this is great, it has nothing to do with buildings, but it's a great read. He's also written Being Mortal, which is a little, little tougher, but also a good read.

Charlie ([25:28](#)):

Thank you. We're going to put links to the books and the podcast show notes. Everybody can click in and check out where to get those books. As we started to come to a close, I've got two more questions. One is career wise. Is there any career advice you wish you'd known a little earlier, Kimberly?

Charlie ([25:42](#)):

I didn't read Stephen Covey's book Seven Habits until I was about, 40 and I would still recommend it because I think his concept of start with the end in mind and really give your career some thought about where you want to end up or what you want to achieve or be known for versus my more, well, I'll go here and do this. It seems like fun right now. It's all worked out for me in a way. I would say think about where you want to be and what you need to be there. Have some sort of expertise that is something that you are good at and that you love to do. The rest will probably fall into place.

Charlie ([26:39](#)):

Fantastic career advice. Lastly, when we started, we talked about encouragement, sparks. Say there is someone jumping in right now to the green building movement or what are you gonna say to the intern candidates later? What words

of encouragement do you have for someone trying to jump in right now to green buildings?

Kimberly ([26:57](#)):

I think it's a great time. We've gone through some ups and downs in the market, right. When I started, it was a great time and it was really exciting and there was a lot of buzz about it. It kinda got a little quiet and got roughed up by the economy. I think we have this new opportunity. A really good time to have a focus on bringing building as a part of whatever your other focus is. I would say that goes back to that. Whether you are in marketing or architecture or facilities or finance can you put a green lens over whatever it is you're doing? And I think you can today, you just have to figure out, what, that is.

Charlie ([27:50](#)):

The Green lens, many good nuggets here, contagious passion, but everyone, this has been Kimberly Hoskin, coming to us from LA. What a story career. I learned a lot about you and you got me excited about what we're still doing in the green building movement. Thank you for being on the podcast today. I just want to say thank you to our loyal listeners. We actually are celebrating over one year here on the Green Building Matters Podcast. Me and the entire team are stoked and just glad to continue to listen every Wednesday morning to a new interview with a green building professional here in this industry, or just some pro tips that we want to make sure that you are getting straight from us straight to you.

Charlie ([28:35](#)):

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