

## **Interview Assessment #1**

**Name of Professional:** Maher Maso

**Profession/Title:** CEO of Prosper Economic Development Corporation

**Business/Company Name:** Prosper Economic Development Corporation

**Date of Interview:** Thursday, September 21st

**Assessment:**

My first informational interview was with Mr. Maher Maso, currently the CEO of the Prosper Economic Development Corporation, and formerly the Mayor of Frisco. It was so exciting that I got the opportunity to speak with the former mayor as my first interview this year. I came at my interest with local government hoping best-case-scenario that I would have the chance to speak to a mayor, and it just speaks to how unique of a program ISM is that students can literally go out and start the year with such a cool interview. Going in I knew it probably wasn't going to end in a mentorship because he doesn't currently work in the Frisco government, but of all the interviews I've had in all of ISM, speaking with Mr. Maso was one of the best.

Speaking with Mr. Maso gave me so much hope about what people in government are like. I think it so easy to become jaded about the people who represent us when it seems like they're not doing enough or don't stand for what the people of the town are like, but with Mr. Maso he seemed so humble and dedicated to make positive change in Frisco more than anything. Mr. Maso emphasized how there's a difference between people who get into office and don't put much in because it's a volunteer position, but for him, he always thought he should do as much as possible because he had been chosen by the people of Frisco. Mr. Maso has been in Frisco for so long and was mayor for for almost a decade, so all the change that he saw in Frisco greatly affected the position itself. He said that a big part of his job was interacting with all the people of Frisco and that meeting new people was easily the best part of his job, too. From what I understand about mayoral positions, they are generally more of figure-heads, acting as the spokespeople of the town, but after meeting with Mr. Maso, I realized I greatly underestimated how much work they do and how much work he did to make Frisco the great place it is today and continues to grow into.

One thing I didn't realize was how much the mayor would work outside of the bounds of local government. Mr. Maso was on a mayoral national committee where he went to Washington D.C. and was even a part of various international organizations. Being that economic growth is so important to Mr. Maso's background and for the prosperity of a city that grows as fast as Frisco, he did point out that economic development had always been a really big part of his job. This made me understand the "cross sections" of government better, how things like economics, development, schools, and legislation all work together to build a city into something great.

Overall, speaking with Mr. Maso was one of the best conversations I've had in the entirety of ISM. Learning the scope of his job, how it changed over his years in office, and how he remained driven to make Frisco the best it could be was so inspiring. It made me so excited about the year to come and was a great way to start off my informational interviews in ISM 2. I can't wait to study the dynamics in rapidly growing cities like Frisco further in ISM this year.