

### **Interview Assessment #5**

**Name of Professional:** Steve Sims

**Profession/Title:** Senior Planner

**Business/Company Name:** City of Plano

**Date of Interview:** Thursday October 18, 2018

**Assessment:**

After speaking with Ms. Pate, I really wanted to focus my fifth informational interview back in the field I had intended to study at the beginning of the year, local government and city growth. Mr. Sims was also the first person I spoke to from the City of Plano, which was really interesting. So much of what I've learned speaking to professionals in Frisco is that a lot of Frisco government has been modeled off of Plano. I didn't realize before the year that city governments really do operate based off of and for other places. In other words, Plano was so successful because of earlier suburbs like Garland, and then Frisco developed based off of Plano, and then in the future, Celina and Prosper will be even more successful after learning from Frisco. After talking to Mr. Maso who's laying the groundwork for Prosper and then Mr. Sims whose work inspired a lot of Frisco, I think it was a really cool perspective on city planning and growth.

Speaking to Mr. Sims, I really got a sense of how much history plays into the success of a city. Mr. Sims knew so much about the history of Plano and how that affected where it currently is today. For example, he said that a lot of Plano's prosperity was because it was a stop on a railroad line many decades ago and of course being a suburb of Dallas was really helpful, too. I was particularly able to connect this to the interview I had with Mr. Maso where he pointed out that in all honesty, a lot of Frisco's greatness was somewhat a result of luck. Because it was a wealthier suburb outside of Dallas, the residents were highly educated from the beginning and now the city as a whole has benefited a lot from that. These conversations have really put in perspective to me how much of city planning is hard work and how much of it is just getting lucky with circumstance.

Another large part of the conversation I had with Mr. Sims was about the upcoming 2020 U.S. Census. I definitely had no idea before speaking to him how crucial it is for cities to participate and work for the census. Mr. Sims pointed out that it's unreasonable for the federal government to be in

charge of the census on every single level because there's no way they can know every single house and zip code well enough to conduct the survey as a whole, so a lot of that work falls on local governments and specifically city planning offices to work with harder to reach households or counts for the most encompassing census possible. This conversation propelled me to continue learning about how the local and federal governments interact through one of my Research Assessments.

Overall, I really enjoyed getting to speak with Mr. Sims. I learned so much about city planning and what he does to make big projects in Plano as successful as they can be. Moving forward, I hope to continue learning about different stages of city growth and particularly how city governments interact with larger governments and how that affects the actual residents and officials of that town.