KATHERINE
KATHERINE
“Bio” Introductions
BROOKE - The tools we have, our plans and processes, our efforts, are much more integrated than most people think.

JIM - The importance of nuances when it comes to sharing information with each other and with the public – words matter.

SARAH - Ensuring that, when all is said and done, what has actually been achieved is quality of place – after all, this is often what the public cares about the most.
1. Defined Roles.
And responsibilities.

BROOKE
Katie introduced you to us using our individual bios.
Let us now introduce you to more of what we actually do.
Sarah?!
SARAH

Definition: a program, group of policies, or set of activities that seeks to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community
SARAH

There are two ways people often look at the "economics" of a community: Growth and Development

Growth just equals more, more, more.

Development is making things better, a constant state of improvement.

We should focus on both!

[Sprawl] If your community is adding lane miles or continuing to annex, but the average vehicle miles traveled is declining, is that considered growth or development?

Can you have development without growth? It depends on who you ask... [in Noblesville] Our answer is redevelopment – we are moving back towards strengthening the core!
Economic Growth

SARAH
Economic Growth - the positive quantitative change in the output of an economy in a particular period in time.

By comparison, to Development it is
Short-term in nature.

Focused on specific periods of time.

Automatic.

Doesn’t necessarily concern itself with the distribution of wealth.

Focused on population level change.

Quantitative.
* New AV
* Number of permits issued
* New subdivisions
* Things we can count with data
SARAH
Economic Development - considers the rise in the output in an economy along with the advancement of such things as:
A rise in living standards,
Advancement in technology, and
Overall happiness of the (in this case) local population.

By comparison…
Long-term growth strategy.
Continuous process.
Requires government intervention.
Focused on balanced and equitable distribution of wealth.
Concerned with the lives of individuals.
Qualitative – the "emotional" stuff.
SARAH

Being able to focus on both economic growth and development is difficult because:

Economic Development has a competitive nature to it – not just locally, but also among other regions, states, and can even be international.

Our regulations are set locally, it could give an advantage to the competition if they have more flexibility in their standards or shorter process timeframes. For Developers: Time = $$.  

ED is a short term focus, and regulations are there, for the most part, for the long term.

Regulations are often overlooked in the relationship world and vice versa.

What is the boundary between private interest and the public good? - That question is often times answered by elected officials, under the advice of department directors. [Traffic, ROI, Smart Growth, etc]

Where does the ideal situation meet what is the real situation? - This could be politics, financial security, constitutional debt limits, etc.
Economic Development.

Economic Developers CAN
Craft policies.
Secure grants and other financial resources.
Negotiate Public-Private Partnerships.
Manage real estate development projects.

Strategies Include
Business Job Recruitment.
Business Retention and Expansion.
New Business Development / Entrepreneurship.
Tax Base Expansion and Diversification.
Redevelopment.
Workforce Development.
Community Economic Development.

SARAH
What can Economic Developers do – and what tools/strategies do they have to do them?

CAN
* Craft policies
* Public Private Partnerships

WITH
* BR&E
* Business attraction
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SARAH
How do these economic development strategies fit in with Planning and Engineering?

We work together to gauge the level of interest for a project - Go/No-Go

Workload

We ask up front questions and answers needed ASAP!

Remember, short turn around for proposals.

Preparation is key.
BROOKE

From a community planning perspective…

Community development is all about building social, economic and political infrastructures in such a way that the community can **sustain itself**.

Much **longer timeframe** than what Sarah just explained.
BROOKE
No to be confused with…

Community organizing seeks to influence key decision-makers.

Some community organizers see their role as challenging municipal, state and federal governments.

Reluctant to accept $.

Community development is, to some degree, reliant on government and business funding and accepts it on behalf of the community.

There are several other distinctions that can be made.

The biggest take away is the expertise that professional planners have brought to the table - that is needed to create a roadmap for future development and redevelopment.
BROOKE

In summary…

**Balancing** economic development with
*Social,*
*Cultural,*
*Environmental*
*Infrastructure*

**Needs** and **Desires**

So where does ENGINEERING fit in?
JIM
This is about the decision points

Educating elected officials, typically we are working within the framework of prior legislation

Budget and funding (buckets of funding and the limitations that exist)

One of our goals is to prevent false-expectations
* Timeline – docketing and public notices, external permitting
* Cost – impact fees, hard and soft costs of development
* Scope – development review knowing what is required for the project

False expectations are not good for business

False expectation are not good for the appearance of government. It gives us a bad reputation.

Do you know when to get up and walk across the hall or pick up the phone?

As a team we are all managing expectation of the public, applicants, and other stakeholders.
JIM

As most of you are aware, the street layout and cross section can encourage or discourage walking or vehicle traffic.

Off-street parking can keep pedestrian-friendly streets clear of driveways, and allow room for on-street parking for deliveries, visitors, etc.

Filling in spaces in already built-up areas and expanding upward in higher rise buildings makes efficient use of past public infrastructure investments, and goes a long way to help pay for the long-term operation and maintenance of those community investments (subject to allowable capacity)

Land use changes made in a vacuum, could undermine the transportation investments.
The more you know.

You May know…
Comprehensive planning.
Zoning.
Thoroughfare planning.
Capital improvement planning.

You May not know…
What a comp plan is, or is not.
Zoning is both a tool and a strategy.
Planning owns the Thoroughfare Plan process.
Planning owns the CIP process.

SARAH

Planning and zoning is enabled by state statute (IC 36-7-4)

A comprehensive plan is document that sets forth a vision and the goals for the future of the city.

An outline of the steps to take to achieve the community’s vision.

Zoning however, is the regulatory tool that is put in place to protect property values and the general welfare of the community.

Thoroughfare planning and Capital Improvement Planning – two areas where “planning” is the lead, but where engineers, like yourselves, are the experts/advisors.
The more you know.

Comprehensive Plan Guides
- Community vision.
- Future (re)development areas.
- Desired land use activities.
- Desired development patterns.
- Transportation access / connectivity.
- Public facilities and infrastructure.

Zoning Regulates
- Purpose and intent.
- Site layout.
- Land use mix and type.
- Massing and scale.
- Building setbacks.
- Required amenities.

BROOKE

The typical comprehensive plan is a compilation of policies, goals, standards and maps for
- Guiding physical improvements, both public and private.
- Accounting for social and environmental issues and opportunities.
- Encouraging economic development.

While it isn’t a legally binding document...

A comprehensive plan provides legal justification for a community’s land-use policies and decision-making.

Zoning is the laws and regulations that shape the physical environment of the community.

When done well, zoning can help build the case for investing public dollars into the types of projects that the community would like to see.
The land use planning process.
Creating a guide.

BROOKE

Q:
* What changes would make it more pleasant and livable?
* Are there areas where the public infrastructure needs to be improved or enhanced?
* And what would you have to do to make the things that the community would like to see legally permissible?

A: Zone it properly.

Unlike zoning district boundaries which are applied at the parcel level, the boundaries illustrated by the land use map are relatively large, irregularly shaped and supplemented by icons and symbols.

Unlike a zoning map that is used to determine which development regulations and standards to apply when governing the land use and development activities on an individual parcel of land, the land use map is only intended to be used to inform conversations and decisions about whether or not a change in use or a (re) development project is appropriate for a given area.

Unlike zoning, land use planning offers a greater degree of flexibility in terms of its interpretation and application.

This distinction between a zoning map (parcel based) and a land use map will be made more clear in a few minutes.
BROOKE
“If you like things the way they are, recognize that everything around us is constantly changing. You have to figure out all of the ways that things are changing so you can preserve the things you like most about your community.”

What most people may not realize is that most of what gets planned is done in such a way as to preserve what already exists.

Throughout much of your local community, the existing land use will remain as the desired land use for the foreseeable future.

There are often just a few instances where the existing land use activities and development type could, or should, change.

There have and will continue to be areas within your community that are highly susceptible to change. – A new highway interchange

There may be others where there is a strong desire for change. – Brownfield

Land use planning offers greater opportunities for local policy and decision-makers to facilitate a public process that results in:
*The establishment of a shared vision.
*A more coordinated approach to land use and development.
*A defensible way in which the community can target capital investments in the near-term.
*Some added predictability for developers.
SARAH

Brooke gave the 30,000 foot view – let’s talk about Private Property Development.

Private property development is its own mountain that needs to be climbed – so too is redevelopment.

An important consideration for any community is how much authority the city has over any given land use decision.

(Hint: It’s less than most people think)
* Rezoning a property from farm land to a commercial shopping center, for example, is one of only a few places where local policy and decision-makers can influence what happens.
* One of only a few places where local policy and decision-makers can assess whether or not what is being proposed will contribute to the overall quality of place, tying the specific parcel decision back to the bigger picture.

A city has the greatest amount of leeway when creating its land use plans and ordinances, compared to administering the same.

Consequently, it is important for any city official to be aware of what authority the city is acting under whenever making a particular decision.

Especially given the fact that all along the way there will be public involvement.

[Street sign example]
BROOKE

People tend to feel strongly about land use in most communities, and it often goes both ways.

Private property owners may feel they should be able to use their land as they see fit, without government telling them what they can and cannot do and where they can and cannot build.

On the other hand, residents may feel as strongly about what others are doing nearby, to the extent that it may injure or disturb the peace and quiet of their neighborhood.
SARAH

Know that most planners are well-versed in managing teams of volunteers, municipal/county staff, and consultants  [Mediation skills example]

Our communities often look to us to play referee – as if we were holding a play book and know all of the answers.

In some instances we do, because the law is very clear on some matters. – Free speech or combined sewer overflow.

Some even criticize us for calling all of the shots.

When in fact, we are almost always asking the communities we serve to help us craft solutions – problem solvers.

This is a very important nuance; one that is almost entirely lost on some and only truly accepted by a few.

[Claims about transparency] – we never make decisions in a vacuum!
JIM

So how can we – as engineers – help?

The three of us have seen how much better things tend to go when engineers, planners and economic developers work together. Don’t get me wrong, we did have some constructive debates.

Land use planning benefits from transportation improvements, and vice versa. There are any number of ways in which, when we work together, we can increase a community’s full planning capacity.

We wanted to be sure to share some of our lessons learned, specifically when it comes to:

* Tools
* Terminology
* Quality of Place
JIM

We have worked together for many years, but we ran into some challenges working on the Thoroughfare Plan, Comp Plan, Streetscape Master Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, and Floodplain Management.

It all came down to differences in terminology.

We figured out how to work together.
BROOKE

It's safe to say that you (we) are in the safety business.

The zoning and subdivision control ordinances are the best tool when it comes to implementing a comprehensive plan.

Together, they establish land use patterns by regulating the way that the property is developed and the types of land use activities that can take place – destinations in engineer speak.

As a planner and someone who has created and administered development regulations, this image causes me grave concern.

I’m guessing it made the hair on your neck stand up a bit.

Give you pause.

It all starts with the Comp Plan – Not the Zoning Ordinance.
SARAH

We keep talking about this Comprehensive Plan, so don’t simply refer to the zoning map when you are doing take-offs or calculating impacts/impact fees or capacity needs.

Do refer to the future land use plan which is within the Comprehensive Plan.

In many instances, what is legally permissible today, isn’t likely to be the case 5, 10 or 15 years from now.
BROOKE

While terms such as “community work,” “community practice,” “community organizing,” “community development”, and “community engagement” are sometimes used interchangeably, they are not the same and can result in very different outcomes.

While updating the City of Noblesville’s comprehensive plan, we uncovered a number of terms and phrases that, when used interchangeably would trip us up every time. * Between professionals. * Between us and the public.
**JIM**
Corridor Study Example – Roads vs. Streets

And a new term I learned "**Strodes!**"

The proliferation of Stroads when every thoroughfare needs to be all things to all people, all the time.

Roads are for cars.

Streets are for people.

Both a road and a street, when designed to reflect what they are, can be safe.

Stroads almost always fail to meet the planning objective.
JIM
[Corridor Study Example – Roadway Classification vs. Functional Classifications]

Discussions about is it a road or is it a street almost always came up when we would talk about improving the level of service of a particular transportation corridor.

Does your thoroughfare plan use these categories, common names and functional classifications interchangeably?

SARAH

[Example] Citizens thought we were converting a local road to a bypass, in reality we were taking their collector road to an arterial road.
JIM

[Corridor Study Example – Route vs. Alignment]

Route – is the 30,000 foot view of the corridor.

Route can be hundreds of feet from the location of the road.

This is first step of the alternative analysis.

Alignment – is more detailed based on preliminary engineering of the road.

Alignment is within a few feet of the actual location of the road.

Final design will determine the location.

BROOKE

Several meetings in and it was looking like we were telling the public we were looking at routes (again).

We were actually talking about feet.

This goes back to transparency issue (not being up front with where the road was going to go.)
SARAH

There has been an underlying theme here today – that is Quality of Place.
JIM

Meet early and with clear communication.
This meme is a joke, but is to show and understand neither engineering, planning, nor economic development has a trump card over the other.
JIM
The community is a complex system, and a systems thinking approach is required to adequately address issues and opportunities.

It is impossible to work on the whole puzzle at once, you need to focus on parts but keep the whole puzzle in mind.

For example,
  * The more amenities, the wider the roadway needs to be, the less walkable/pedestrian friendly it becomes.
  * A winding boulevard? Is that what you really want?
  * The more items the public wants incorporated, the more space it takes, the greater the impact to adjacent properties.

If there is a place where engineering and planning come together, it’s here – managing people’s expectations.

In these instances, we need to do a better job of looping in economic development.

[Noblesville example – Development Team] – weekly or bi-weekly meetings with the administration

Meeting is to discuss key topics of a project.
BROOKE

Some of the pitfalls of planning and zoning.

No more wish lists.

Stop ignoring the long-term operations and maintenance costs – even during the planning process.
SARAH

Problem boundaries often don’t match jurisdictional boundaries, leaving few opportunities to limit spillover effects among communities. (e.g. flooding)

Extra-territorial jurisdiction for planning; not for engineering.

Outside City Limits = County "Not It"
JIM

We are all partners of different backgrounds, education, and experiences working towards one common goal.

Which is…
JIM

Quality of place.

Lots to do.

Plan EARLY Plan OFTEN & Be INCLUSIVE.

Development projects that train residents in local governance, also develop internal social capital.

Get involved in ED & Planning initiatives [Development Team] ~ it will benefit all departments!
JIM

On behalf of Sarah, Brooke and myself, Thank you!

Questions?