



**COMMUNITY PLANNING**  
SOCIAL NETWORKS . DESIGN  
**DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
RESEARCH . CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

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My professional expertise centers around aiding **SUMMARY** communities to be truly sustainable. From grant writing to planning research, and from graphic design to citizen engagement, I strive to systematically identify and help communities implement more effective means to reach their goals while further leveraging momentum and resources at hand. My efforts aim to merge community planning with regional sustainability by bridging real world experience with research expertise. **References available upon request.**

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Rockford Region Economic  
Development District

### Executive Director

Rockford, Illinois (2010-Present)

*Oversee local Economic Development District.*

- Developed Region's Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (RPSD) Planning Process; primary author of the HUD RPSD grant awarded; co-administrator of plan development and grant administration.
- Developer and lead on Rockford Region Sustainability Indicators Project.
- Coordinate economic development initiatives for region, including administration of regional economic development grants.
- Oversee administration of organization, including serving RREDD Governing Board and Committees and supervise RREDD staff.

Rockford Area Economic  
Development Council

### Director of Research

Rockford, Illinois (2008-2010)

*Coordinate economic development planning research; lead founding of Economic Development District.*

- Lead regional economic development planning and research initiatives.
- Manage graphic design, public relations, and messaging for RAEDC.
- Specializing in sustainability as it pertains to economic wellbeing of the Rockford Region.
- Lead development of area's first EDA-designated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.
- Lead economic development grant writing for region.
- Supervised Research Associates of the RAEDC.

Studio S27, Urban Design, Graphic  
Design, and Disaster Planning Firm

### Planning Division Lead

Toulon, Illinois (2007)

*Coordinated and supervised studio projects.*

- Urban Designer: focusing on zoning updates, GIS, downtown plans, smart growth principles and policy, public participation, site design & layout, long-range planning, site plan review, building rehab, historical preservation.
- Sustainable Design Coordinator: specializing in LEED-ND and green development practices.
- Graphic Designer: specializing in design of PR materials for urban design purposes.

Main Street Ottumwa and  
Ottumwa Progress Incorporated,  
Downtown Revitalization Non-Profit

### Director

Ottumwa, Iowa (2006-2007)

*Downtown Development Coordinator of blighted district.*

- Manage/administrate downtown redevelopment projects and events.
- Coordinate community participation in revitalization.
- Coordinate economic development, urban design/architectural rehabilitation, promotional/ branding events and campaigns (the Main Street 4-Point Approach).
- Managed OPI's properties.

Farr Associates, Architecture and  
Urban Design Firm

### Project Administrator

Chicago, Illinois (2006)

*Project manager for sustainable urbanism text book published by John Wiley and Sons. Book includes history of human/natural systems, sustainability tools/standards, and case studies of sustainable neighborhood developments around the world.*

- Manage/administrate office staff.
- Assistant for marketing/public relations duties include grant writing, requests for proposals, and producing marketing materials for firm.

HUB, Weekly Cultural Newspaper

### Creative Director

Champaign, Illinois (2005-2006)

*Director of design for weekly cultural paper.*

- Layout Director.
- Head Advertisement Designer.
- Manager of Creative Template & Design of Photography.

UIUC Community Design Center

### Founding Director

Champaign, Illinois (2003-2006)

*Engagement office for community members and university faculty/students/staff to focus on community cultural, planning, community development, and design issues. Funded by the University of Illinois' Office of Public Engagement and Institutional Relations.*

- Supervised students, community members in engagement urban design and planning projects.
- Served on numerous community and economic development committees.
- Awarded several major grants.
- Booked exhibits, facilitated community meetings, curated exhibits, hosted events, created engagement programs, and program maintenance, etc.

## EDUCATION

### Doctorate of Urban Planning

University of Illinois

Formatively Assessing Community Planning Implementation: Development of a Diagnostic Tool  
2004 - 2011  
Major Professor Emily Talen, Professor Urban and Regional Planning

### Master of Urban Planning

University of Illinois

Specialization in Urban Design, Urban Design History, Community Engagement, Sustainability  
2002 - 2004  
Major Professor Emily Talen, Professor Urban and Regional Planning

### Bachelor of Urban Planning

Iowa State University

Specialization in Cultural Development and Planning  
1998-2002  
Minor in Design Studies, Painting, and Drawing; Graduation with Honors, Distinction

## SUMMARY OF SKILLS

### Administrative

Liaison, Networking with Community Leaders  
Experienced Steward of Board of Directors  
Project Planning, Management  
Leadership  
Principles of Budgeting, Finance  
Staff Supervision, Evaluation  
Non-profit Organization Management

### Sustainability

Regional Sustainability Indicators  
LEED-ND  
Safety  
Civic Vitality  
Cultural Life  
Health and Wellness  
Food Systems  
Housing  
Education  
Access to Opportunity  
Poverty Reduction  
Economic Development  
Technology  
Transportation  
Built Infrastructure  
Water  
Land  
Biodiversity  
Energy  
Waste Management

### Research

Survey Development  
Statistics  
Forecasting  
Census Analysis  
ACCRA Cost of Living Index  
Qualitative Methods  
Quantitative Methods  
Social Network Analysis  
Survey Development, Administration, Analysis

### Planning & Urban Design

Housing Programs (rent assistance programs)  
Geographic Information Systems  
Cost-Benefit Analysis  
Land Use Policy  
Streetscape, Site Design and Review  
Signage, Design Guidelines and Review  
Design Guidelines and Review  
Form-Based Codes  
Community Development  
Cultural Development  
TIF Financing  
Neighborhood & Comprehensive Planning  
Long Range Planning

### Design

Website Design (HTML, PHP)  
Logo, Ad Design  
Publication Design and Layout  
Videos  
Architectural & Urban Design Rendering

### Historic Preservation

Architectural Surveys  
GIS for Historic Preservation, Disaster Planning  
Charrette Facilitation  
Rehabilitation of Historic Properties  
Community Participation Coordination  
Disaster Planning for Blighted Areas

### Economic Development

Targeted Industry Research  
Market Analysis  
Business Attraction, Expansion, Retention  
Business Plan Development  
Commercial Property Management  
Sustainable Business Practices  
Collective Advertising  
Experiential Economy Method  
Incentives Research  
Key Property Information Management

### Civic Engagement

Event Planning, Administration  
Managing Engagement Efforts  
Teaching Effective Engagement Skills  
Facilitating Public Meetings and Focus Groups  
Conducting Asset Mapping  
Running Appreciative Inquiry Exercises  
Coordinating of Community Building  
Engaging Diverse Populations, General Public

### Communication

Social Media for Business Application  
Public Speaking, Presentation Abilities  
Strong Interpersonal Skills  
Synthesizing Large Amounts of Information  
Develop Relationships with Area Organizations  
Listening, Negotiating Skills  
Editing, Writing Reports/Proposals/Grants

### Marketing and Public Relations

Press Releasing, Creating Press Kits  
Organizing and Executing Press Campaigns  
Creating and Distributing Press Materials  
Designing Branding Campaigns  
Guerrilla PR and Marketing Tactics

### Grants

Research Opportunities  
Initiative Preparation, Implementation  
Writing  
Administration

### Software

COMPUTER WORKSHOPS  
ArcGIS 10, AutoCad  
OFFICE APPLICATIONS  
Microsoft Office Professional 2010, Microsoft Visio,  
Microsoft Project, UCLnet  
DESIGN APPLICATIONS  
Google Sketchup Pro, Adobe CS5 Master  
Collection

## LEADERSHIP, FORMER, AND CURRENT RESPONSIBILITIES

River District Association Board of Directors  
City of Rockford Mayor's Civic Design Advisory Group  
Rockford City Market Administrative Committee  
Guest Lecturer on Sustainable Issues for Iowa State University's Planning Department in Italy  
Rotary International  
Kiwanis International  
Americans for the Arts -- also Emerging Leaders Division  
American Planning Association -- also New Urbanism and Economic Development Divisions  
National Trust for Historical Preservation  
Golden Key National Honor Society  
Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society  
Member Congress for New Urbanism  
Ottumwa Area Arts Council Board of Directors  
Cofounder of IndividualsTOGETHER, young professionals organization in Champaign County  
Deputy Registrar and Election Judge for Champaign County  
Consultant for both Champaign Downtown Association and Urbana Business Association  
40 North/88 West Champaign County Art Council's Public Relations Committee  
Champaign County Boneyard Arts Festival Co-chair 2005  
Urbana Sweetcorn Festival Marketing Co-chair 2005  
Urbana Sweetcorn Festival Volunteer Coordinator 2004, 2005  
Volunteer Coordinator for Beer and Chili Cook-off Festival 2004  
Delegate for UIUC Chancellor's Office at 2004 Imagining America Conference  
Panel Member of 2004 Krannert Museum's Discussion on Women and the Arts  
Member, US Representative Naomi Jakobssen's Economic Development Committee  
Co-founder, UIUC Students for New Urbanism Committee  
Iowa State University College of Design's Design Council 2002-2003  
Lifeguard Instructor, American Red Cross  
T.A. for Iowa State University's Design Exchange Freshman Program 2002-2003

## DISSERTATION

**Tool Accessible Online at [www.engagedplanningcommunities.com](http://www.engagedplanningcommunities.com)**

### **“FORMATIVELY ASSESSING COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION: DEVELOPMENT OF A DIAGNOSTIC TOOL”**

This research offers a diagnostic tool to formatively assess a community's ability to implement plans and planning activities. The objective of this study was to develop a social network analysis tool to formatively diagnose—and therefore assess and understand—the ability of a community to implement plans and planning activity. In doing so, community members and professionals may more effectively understand the full communicative dynamics at work in local planning implementation. In this way locals may be able to better engage, empowered to plan in a more comprehensive manner, and potentially more successfully resolve their communities' problems. Preparation for a community's future is crucial. This is why community planning exists. But all too often communities expect if a good plan or proven planning process is developed the result will be good too. Granted, planning implementation is incredibly complex -- a myriad of dynamics can unhinge a good vision from coming to fruition. This diagnostic tool was developed to directly address this ongoing challenge facing communities. The diagnostic results of the assessment provides greater understanding of what is working in planning implementation and what isn't. These results empower communities to shape their own future success.

## NOTABLE PROJECT EXPERIENCE

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 2011      | <b>Social Media Trainer</b><br>Trained 400 staff of Winnebago County Court Services on the professional use of social media.  |
| 2009-2011 | <b>Rockford City Market</b><br>Researched local foods systems with CEDS team to develop regional market for Rockford Region. Identified and garnered funding for June, 2010 opening. Serving as virtual incubation for local food growing and processing, retail, and arts. Planned spring 2011 launch of indoor regional market to continue incubation in indoor facility with commercial kitchen. |

2006-2007	<p><b>National Consultant for Community Design Centers</b></p> <p>Consultant for CDC's in Iowa, Texas, Illinois, and Pennsylvania. Advised on program creation, gallery management, etc.</p>
2003-2006	<p><b>individualsTOGETHER</b></p> <p>Co-founder individualsTOGETHER, a local effort to engage young community members (approximately 16-40 years old) in community issues. Networking, education about project management and completion, and exposure to the local power structure all aimed to support and grow tomorrow's leaders today.</p>
2003-2006	<p><b>Media Coordinator for CDC Continuing Ed Workshop Series</b></p> <p>This series focuses on skills not often utilized in grassroots planning. Drawing, Photoshop, InDesign, website design, marketing, and PR are all topics covered.</p>
2006	<p><b>Marketing Co-Coordinator Boneyard Art Festival</b></p> <p><i>Press and marketing coordinator for the Fifth Annual Boneyard Arts Festival. Coordinated and distributed press materials, coordinated design of press and marketing materials, and coordinator/lead manager of main event, the Cabaret.</i></p>
2005	<p><b>Grand Opening of CDC</b></p> <p><i>Lead for Grand Opening of CDC, the University of Illinois' Community Design Center.</i></p> <p>Coverage in News Gazette Newspaper, The Hub Weekly cultural newspaper, Daily Illini University of Illinois newspaper.</p>
2004	<p><b>Sweetcorn Festival Volunteer Coordinator, Marketing Coordinator</b></p> <p><i>Author of articles on urbanism and cultural organization in the Hub, local cultural newspaper.</i></p> <p>Press Representative to recruit Sweetcorn Festival's 400 volunteers, and interviews by Channel 3 News, Channel 15 News, UPTV local access station, and by The Daily Illini.</p>
2004-2005	<p><b>Design Coordinator, Boneyard Festival</b></p> <p>Coordinated and designed press kit as well as marketing materials. Also co-designer, manager of space, event for the main event.</p>
2003	<p><b>Lincoln Square Mall</b></p> <p><i>Lead for Public Forums for Lincoln Square Mall, Lead for Course Public Presentation</i></p> <p>Interviews by Channel 3 news, Channel 15 news, WILL public radio, and articles in News-Gazette newspaper and Daily Illini University of Illinois newspaper.</p>
2003	<p><b>Member, Special Initiative for City of Chicago Branding/Identity</b></p> <p>Project worked with Chicago business leaders, venture capitalists, local residents, entrepreneurs, and young professionals to determine what determines the perception and reality of the creative economy. Focus groups, surveys, interviews, industry research all served to provide the basis of a branding/identity campaign for the Chicago Metro Area to compete in the next era of successful cities.</p>
2002	<p><b>Coordinator Freshmen Creativity Competition, Iowa State</b></p> <p>This competition aimed to expose the Iowa State University College of Design's Freshmen Design students (architecture, graphic design, interior design, urban planning, art, landscape architecture) to inter-disciplinary collaboration, the creative process, and real-world projects.</p>
2002	<p><b>Student Advisor, Teaching Assistant - Design Exchange, Iowa State</b></p> <p>This program oriented Freshmen Design Students to the College of Design by teaching methods and concepts to excel both an academic and professional sense. In addition, the students were taught coping and social skills helping them prepare for college life.</p>
2001	<p><b>Intern, Extension Services in Community/Economic Development</b></p> <p>Performed various tasks with the Iowa State Extension staff including publication design, archiving, etc.</p>
2001-Present	<p><b>Artist</b></p> <p>Classically trained artist specializing in painting, drawing, and photography. Exhibited personal work in Rockford, Illinois, at Iowa State University, gallery in Urbana, Illinois.</p>

## GRANT WORK- PRIMARY AUTHOR

2010  
Awarded

### Rockford Regional Plan for Sustainable Development

Primary author, planning process engineer, and administrator of this grant. HUD's Partnership for Sustainable Communities has awarded the Rockford Region a \$600,000 grant to expand and continue the efforts to create a regional sustainability plan and performance measuring process. The HUD award was the result of a local consortium of 30 agencies in Boone County and Winnebago County that agreed to provide support and align their strategic plans and long-range visions into a set of common goals and action steps. The grant award positions the region to receive future implementation grants from the DOT, EPA and HUD. The local consortium was anchored by the City of Rockford, the Rockford Region Economic Development District, the Rockford Housing Authority, Winnebago County and RMAP.

2010  
Awarded

### Rockford Region Downtown Business Attraction Workforce Pipeline

Through a \$100,000 grant from the SBA, businesses grown in this incubation system are identified in a two ways: 1) finding local entrepreneurs and providing them with a structured growth strategy and support services, and 2) attracting existing, emerging entrepreneurial businesses from outside the region looking for quality support services to grow. This model has a three-tiered approach to growing local businesses through incubation. Companies can enter at any of the three stages, and once their business has outgrown a stage they graduate to the next tier.

#### 1. STEP ONE: OUTDOOR VENDING – TEMPORARY INCUBATION.

New entrepreneurs are recruited to the outdoor, weekly market and support services. The outdoor market allows program participants to test market their products before investing greatly in overhead while they develop their business plans. Vendors participating in the incubation programming through the SBDC office are subsidized in their market participation.

#### 2. STEP TWO: INDOOR VENDING AND PRODUCTION – DAILY INCUBATION.

Emerging entrepreneurs are either graduated through the outdoor market or recruited to the indoor-daily market, production of their product, and support services. The indoor market and production allows program participants to further test market their products before investing greatly in overhead while they develop their business plans. Vendors participating in the incubation programming through the SBDC and EIGERlab are subsidized in their participation.

#### 3. STEP THREE: INDEPENDENT BUSINESS LOCATION – VIRTUAL INCUBATION.

Emerging entrepreneurs are either graduated from the indoor market and/or EIGERlab production or recruited into the program to have an independent business location. This location, depending on the business type, may be a production facility for food processing or retail product development, a storefront, a restaurant, or a knowledge-base office. Companies at this stage will receive support services through the SBDC, EIGERlab, the RAEDC, Growth Dimensions, and various municipalities within the two-county region.

2010  
Awarded

### Rockford Region Aerospace Incubator Program

This economic adjustment project has three-fold: a strategic plan for restructuring the economy of the Region, building a seamless digital interface for staff to work more effectively and efficiently in economic development work, and an implementation strategy. Awarded by SBA for award amount of \$100,000.

2010  
Award Pending  
Congressional Budget

### Rockford Region Economic Adjustment Grant

This economic adjustment project has three-fold: a strategic plan for restructuring the economy of the Region, building a seamless digital interface for staff to work more effectively and efficiently in economic development work, and an implementation strategy. Under final review of the EDA for award amount of \$1,000,000.

2010  
Awarded

### Rockford City Market

This grant obtained seed funding from the Rock River Development Partnership and the Smith Foundation for the Rockford City Market's inaugural year. Award amount \$20,000.

2007  
Awarded

### Facade Improvement Program

This grant was written to the City of Ottumwa requesting funds for a TIF financed facade improvement program. The program consists of a 25% matching grant up to \$10,000 per property and an interest buy-down component up to \$5,000 per property. Award amount \$150,000.

2004  
Awarded

### Historical Archives Engagement

Written with the UIUC Archives staff and a private consultant firm, this grant aimed to engage students and community members in cataloguing and creating learning programs for the architectural and urban planning archives in the UIUC library. Grant covered staffing, PR efforts, educational programming, and various materials. Award amount \$30,000.

2004  
Awarded

### **UIUC Community Design Center**

Co-creator of proposal for seed funding of the University of Illinois' Community Design Center. Grant covered space funding, staffing, programming and miscellaneous materials. Award amount \$70,000.

2004  
Awarded

### **Imagining America Conference**

Conference on higher education engaging community members using the arts and culture. Grant covered travel expenses and conference registration.

2002  
Awarded

### **Galleria Design and Use**

Research of Italian gallerias and efficacy within the urban landscape in terms of social issues and physical design. Grant covered travel expenses.

## **WORKING PAPERS**

### **Engaged Planning Communities: A Diagnostic Tool Assessing the Ability of a Community to Implement Planning Efforts**

### **The Social Network Theory of Community Planning**