

## GEORGRAPHER INTERVIEW

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Read an interview of a real person who uses geography in his or her career. Answer the questions on your **Geographer Interview Analysis** sheet. Be ready to share your answers and ideas!

### 1) What is your job title?

My title is Co-Managing Partner of MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design LLP and I am the current Chair of the Seattle Design Commission. I am a Planner, sometimes called an "Urban Planner," "City Planner," "Land Use Planner," or "Facility Planner."

### 2) How would you describe what you do?

I do a lot of different things. I help cities transform neighborhoods, ports manage waterfronts, and organizations develop campuses. The common theme is that I work with my clients to create a "vision" of what is desired in the future and then make a plan to get there.

### 3) How do you work with geography? What kinds of questions do you try to answer? What problems do you try to solve?

For each project I build a series of maps to show existing conditions, problems, and opportunities, answering questions like the ones below:

#### Existing Conditions

- Who lives and works in the area?
- Where are the houses, schools, stores, and businesses?
- Where are people going? On foot? On bikes? In cars? On the bus?
- Where are the parks and playgrounds? Natural forests, wetlands, or streams?
- Are there any beautiful views in the neighborhood?

#### Issues and Opportunities

- Where isn't it safe or fun to walk or bike?
- Where are more houses, schools, stores, or businesses needed?
- Where should there be more places to play? Walk the dog? Get to school?

### 4) Why is geography important to you?

Geography is important to me for three reasons—it helps me understand projects, communicate ideas, and get people to work together.

### 5) What kinds of geographic maps or tools do you use in your work?

Typically in my office, we start our background research on the Internet using Google Maps.

### 6) How do you decide which tools to use?

Then, we use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to prepare base maps and gather information about a project. If the project requires a more detailed design, we use AutoCAD. We then prepare analysis maps, typically using GIS and Adobe Illustrator. We also prepare a lot of hand sketches and 3D models using SketchUp.

It depends on the project needs and what information is available. At a neighborhood, city, or regional planning scale, GIS and illustration tools are most useful to communicate information and generate ideas. Design projects demand a higher level of accuracy and lend themselves to AutoCAD. Hand sketches are great for rough drafts, quick illustrations, or to invoke a particular feel. If the project requires a greater contextual understanding, we'll build a 3D model of the site and surroundings in SketchUp.

### 7) How would your skills help you in the event of a zombie apocalypse?

Great question. We would employ our skills to develop a survival plan, with five areas of focus:

- A. **Know Your Enemy.** Analyze zombie movement patterns to map existing behavior and predict future movement.
  - Will they tend to move down unobstructed areas, like major roads?
  - Are they attracted to population centers as their food source?
  - Do they move toward bright lights? Loud noises?
  - What areas are difficult for zombies to access? Roof tops? Underground?
  - What barriers restrict zombie movement? Water bodies? Tall fences or walls? Hidden passageways?
- B. **Retreat to Safety.** Map a network of "safe havens" for apocalypse survivors. We'd use geographic tools to identify areas likely to be safe from zombies.
  - Away from zombie attractors (see above)
  - Protected by zombie barriers (see above)
  - With access to essential resources like clean water and food, shelter, fuel, weapons, etc.
- C. **Help Your Friends.** Use maps to communicate safe haven locations and access routes to survivors. For example, the sketch to the right identifies safe haven islands in Seattle's Ship Canal Between Lake Washington and Lake Union. This assumes zombies can't swim, have taken over downtown Seattle, and move most freely on highways and major arterials.
- D. **Rebuild the World.** Once the safe haven network is established, rebuild a post-apocalyptic society.

<sup>1</sup> Betsy Jacobsen, Wesley Kirkman, Rachel Miller, and Alex Wallace (MAKERS' urban design, planning, and Geographic Information System special forces team) helped answer this question. Graphic by Wesley Kirkman.

- Create a system to fairly distribute resources between the safe havens.
- Reduce dependence on resources that require trips outside the safe havens.
  - Establish "urban agriculture" on rooftops, hanging from walls, behind fortress walls, etc.
  - Develop a sustainable, renewable source of energy harnessing solar, wind, water, ground source heat, etc.
  - Focus on bicycle and other non-fuel dependent methods to move people around the safe haven network.
- Prevent zombie kills. Employ "zombie prevention through environmental design", or "ZPTED" principles to create safe places. For example, if zombies are attracted to loud noises, strategically place loud noise making devices to lure zombies away from safe havens, essential resources, and access routes.

#### E. Play it Safe. Prevent future zombie outbreaks.

- Develop a ZERP (Zombie Emergency Response Plan).
- Learn to recognize early stage outbreaks and identify, map, and limit exposure to conditions that lead to outbreaks.

