*“The best way to predict the future is to create it yourself.”* - Abraham Lincoln

*“There are only two kinds of change in the world today: planned change and unplanned change. Communities can grow by choice or by chance.”* - Edward McMahon, Senior Resident Fellow at the Urban Land Institute

*“Without vision, the people perish.”* The Book of Proverbs

Sherwood may not “perish,” but without vision, we have succumbed to the average as we continue to grow by chance and without vision. To make a vision, a reality, we must have long term strategic planning. To do this effectively and efficiently, our city must have experienced professional planners on staff to guide us on this journey.

In a Mayor Heye-Townsell Administration, there will be a restructuring of the Engineering, Permits, and Planning Office. There will be two separate departments: an Engineering Department and a Planning, Permitting, and Inspection Department. ***This was already done by Ordinance in October of 2016 but has been administratively ignored***. This would allow engineering to focus on engineering, which under the current administration, we have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars outsourcing even simple engineering. This would also free up this department to oversee our current street projects which now has to be outsourced as well.

Sherwood is also spending $2,000 a month for an experienced – and outsourced - city planner to come to the planning commissioner meetings. This planner primarily advises smaller, rural communities who don’t have professional planners on staff. Communities of Sherwood’s size practically all have an experienced planners on staff. We should have a Planning, Permits, and Inspection Department that has an experienced City Planner Department Head on staff. A second planner should also be retained to help review development plans and work with the developers, review rezoning and conditional use requests, variance requests, city codes and planning ordinances. I also would consider a move to have permits and inspections as a separate department that can focus on servicing the building industry in Sherwood. All these departments will work together, but each are critical to our city’s future in different ways.

Better Planning leads to better communities. Sherwood needs good planning to Build our Best Homes to Live Our Best Lives.