

# Mary Jo's Heye-lights

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## SHERWOOD GROWS TO 32,731 GROWTH RATE LAGS PEER CITIES IN 2020 CENSUS

The 2020 Census data has been released and it paints an interesting picture. Now there is no doubt that due to the pandemic, everyone's numbers are probably a little lower than the actual. However, the cities that were most likely affected by an under count would have been those with universities. As a reminder, the count was based on where you were on April 1<sup>st</sup> and due to Covid, many of the college students had been sent home before April 1<sup>st</sup>. With this in mind, it is important to compare communities with as many similarities as possible, so I did not use Conway. I excluded North Little Rock and Little Rock due to population.

Sherwood's 2040 Vision compared itself with Benton thus, I obtained the Benton data. I also looked at Bryant and Cabot to see how we fared in comparison to these communities. I wanted to see what the numbers can tell us. I pulled data from the 2000, 2010, and 2020 censuses.

Sherwood did grow. The 2020 Census determined Sherwood has 32,731 people which is a 10.8% growth. We are now more diverse with "White Only" being 62.4% versus 75.3% in 2010. All the communities compared did become more diverse with Bryant having the largest percentage growth in this category, although Sherwood still leads the way with the largest percentage of diversity. (It is a nationwide trend that educated communities are seeing an increase in the "other" category. The "other" category is for people who are identifying with more than one race. While there an increase in interracial marriages, many people who previously checked the "White Only" box are increasingly identifying with more than one race.) The data on age, education and household income is not available yet. Being a growing, diverse community is truly a positive.

While reviewing the census numbers from our Sherwood's peer cities, I was reminded of a statement one of my son's made. My second son Thomas was giving a speech to younger swimmers his senior year when he said, "You are not as good as you think you are, BUT you could be." Certainly, Sherwood's growth rate is not as good as we thought it was, especially reflected in the Vision 2040, but, with good planning and great amenities, we can be! **( See GROWTH Page 2 )**

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(GOWTH Continued from Page 1) *"Sherwood Vision 2040"* had projected us to be 38,659 by historic trends, 34,562 by UALR-Point forecasts, and 36,769 by Woods & Poole. Sherwood's 2020 Census numbers show we are not as big as we thought we were. Further, as shown in the chart below, Sherwood's rate of growth in the last decade was surpassed by all of its peer cities in Central Arkansas except one. Clearly, other area cities are outperforming Sherwood in attracting new residents.

So, what can we learn by these numbers? We are competing for families. We are competing every day for growth and prosperity. In the last decade, we rested on our laurels, and it shows. Sherwood got outpaced with the *"It is what it is"* attitude.

Why is growth so important? With growth, home & business property values are more easily maintained, if not actually increased. Any new business whether grocery stores, restaurants, big box retail, or mom & pops, all want to locate in areas with strong population growth. With new residents and businesses comes an increased sales tax base bringing the city more revenue to build and maintain streets as well as add in amenities to make our community more desirable.

When is growth bad? Growth is bad when we do not plan for it. When we do not plan for it, you end up with excess traffic and drainage problems. (Perhaps this sounds familiar?) With strategic thinking and planning, these things can be avoided or minimized. Is any community perfect? Of course not, and I am by no means saying that Sherwood is not a great place to live. This is the place I chose to call home and raise my family when I could have picked anywhere in the country.

*However, we can do better.* If we want Sherwood to be strong and prosper in the future, then we must be more proactive and stop playing from behind. This is not the way to be the best we can be. With no city planner on staff for two decades, strategic planning was lost. We were not making sure that roads were being built to

handle the traffic and it is now costing us dearly. We weren't being strategic by connecting neighborhoods to help with life-saving response times. We weren't building parks and facilities out where they were most needed in the developing areas. And finally having the engineering to make sure that the water flow caused by more roof tops and asphalt was being detained in a way to not cause downstream problems.

People like Rob Middleton, Chairman of the Planning Commission, are working hard to help plan, but he is just a volunteer. During the last decade we contracted to have a consultant planner. This is not the same thing as having one on staff working every day just for Sherwood. Conway is approximately twice our size and have three planners on staff currently. They had two on staff when they were smaller than we are now. Both Benton and Bryant have City Planners.

Sherwood cannot win with only a defense. We need an offense as well that is being proactive, researching trends, making sure we are prepared and leading the pack, not just always following it. We need to sharpen our blades and get more competitive. Remember, we may not be as good as we think, but we can be better in the future than most ever imagined! MJHT

## POPULATION COMPARISON HISTORY Central Arkansas Mid-Sized Cities, 10,000 to 50,000 Pop.

SHERWOOD			BRYANT		
2000	21,511	13.9%	2000	9,764	85.3%
2010	29,523	37.2%	2010	16,688	70.9%
2020	32,731	10.8%	2020	20,663	23.8%
CABOT			JACKSONVILLE		
2000	15,412	83.4%	2000	29,916	2.8%
2010	23,776	55.8%	2010	28,364	-5.2%
2020	26,569	11.7%	2020	29,477	3.9%
BENTON			MAUMELLE		
2000	21,906	20.5%	2000	10,557	57.2%
2010	30,681	40.1%	2010	17,163	62.5%
2020	35,014	14.1%	2020	19,251	12.2%

# Mary Jo's Heye-lights

## SHERWOOD AWARDED METROPLAN GRANTS

**Mary Jo Heye**  
Posted by Mary Jo Mauermann Heye-Townsell  
Sep 27, 2018 · 🌐

Innovative Ideas!!!  
This photo is an example of an opportunity to create walking and biking trails at very little cost. We can use the area under our transmitter lines to create an amenity. The research shows this is an amenity that is appealing to young families. It is all about developing quality of place that leads to a better quality of life!  
Building for a Brighter Future for Sherwood!  
Re-elect Mary Jo Heye

45 Likes · 8 Shares

Like Comment Share

**My Facebook post from 2018 underscores my long advocacy for bicycling in Sherwood & this power line trail in particular.**

### TWO PROJECTS of THREE RECEIVE METROPLAN NOD

Sherwood was recently awarded two grants through Metroplan for which I have been a long-time advocate. Every year Metroplan awards Surface Transportation Block Grants to Member Jurisdictions. These are competitive grants that are scored based on a number of criteria. There is a street track, a bike/ped track, and a jump start track meant to encourage development of classic downtowns.

Sherwood put in three grant applications: the light at Gap Creek and Brockington, Maryland and Oakbrook round about, and the powerline trail. The Maryland and Oakbrook Roundabout and the Gap Creek and Brockington Light were both applied for under the street track. And the Powerline Trail was applied for under the bike/ped track.

The light at Gap Creek and Brockington is long overdue. With 26,000 cars a day travelling down Brockington, trying to get out of the Gap Creek neighborhood has become difficult and dangerous. Furthermore, Gap Creek Drive along Indianhead drive are the only accesses to approximately 800 homes east of Brockington. This light will also be important to cyclist because this will be where the future powerline trail system will cross Brockington Road. This is a 80/20 grant. Sherwood City Council will now need to allocate their part for the grant process to be complete and receive the 80%. This was the first time that Sherwood applied for this project to receive a grant.

The Maryland and Oakbrook Roundabout once again finished near the bottom of the list and therefore did not receive a grant. This is the second year in a row that Sherwood has put this project in for a grant. This project most likely continues to not score well because this is a local project inside a neighborhood verse something that affects the region. The engineering has been done on this project and Sherwood probably just needs to look at other funding sources such as the bond money to complete the project. Once the Maryland projects are complete, this project will be more beneficial to the area for several reasons such as slowing down the traffic while keeping it moving in the neighborhood. Residents of Gap Creek have experienced how well the roundabouts work on a collector streets. ( See GRANTS next page )

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## **(GRANTS continued from Last Page )**

During my re-election campaign September 27, 2018, I had a social media post about innovative ideas showing how easy it would be to use the land under the transmission lines for a bike/ped trail. **(SEE Sidebar)** This post can be found under Mary Jo Heye on Facebook.

Last year, Sherwood applied for a grant for the Powerline Trail but, because there was only a conceptual drawing, it received only engineering monies for the North/South part of the trail that was applied for this year. At the time of this year's grant application, none of the engineering had been done. This sounds bad but it was due to a complicated process involving not only Sherwood but also, Metroplan and ARDOT. This year's grant application included not only the North/South part between Kiehl and Brockington, but also the other side of Kiehl that will go by Clinton Elementary and connect to the Henson Trail. Sherwood asked for 4.6 million for everything including construction. The maximum award available however, was 3 million.

Sherwood received \$750,000 in a 80/20 split with Sherwood's part being \$187,500. With Sherwood estimating the project to be 4.6 million, there is clearly a long way to go to complete this project. However, Sherwood can apply again. And hopefully Sherwood will have the engineering and part of the right of way secured so that the project will score higher and therefore perhaps qualify for a larger amount. This project once completed will be a significant bike/ped trail that is a good step forward in becoming a more bike friendly community as well as to help us to be more up to date with what communities need to appeal and attract families. Just as with the Gap Creek Light Project, the City Council must approve the funding of the \$187,500. **MJHT**

## **ODDS & ENDS**



### **Disc Golf is coming to Sherwood Forest**

Disc golf is a popular new sport that has been popping up around central Arkansas. Several communities including North Little Rock, Bryant, and Little Rock. In fact, North Little Rock just installed their third course. The contract has been awarded for the installation, the monies allocated by Council, and once the goals arrive then hopefully it will not take long to get it up and going. There will be an 18 hole course behind the splashpad in the wooded area. This is a fun free activity, just bring your discs or frisbees. **MJHT**

### **Improvements To Indianhead Park**

Indianhead park had fallen into disrepair and sat for years in a dilapidated condition. Towards the end of last year the playground equipment was installed. A swing set was added and now a sitting area for parents/grandparents with a sidewalk for ADA compliance. The people in this neighborhood are happy to see this park come back to life. **MJHT**



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**Call for Vendors & Volunteer Groups!**

**44TH ANNUAL SHERWOOD FEST**

Sherwood Sports Complex  
511 Bear Paw Road  
Saturday, Sept. 25, 2021  
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**MORE INFO:**  
501-835-6893  
Sherwoodfest@cityofsherwood.net

## **SHERWOOD TO TAKE BIKE/PED STUDY TOUR TO NORTHWEST ARKANSAS**

Utilizing a Metroplan planning grant of \$5,000, Sherwood is inquiring about taking a two-day study tour of Northwest Arkansas bike/ped pathways. Metroplan has dedicated half of its federal funding for the next decade, \$55 million dollars, for the creation of a regional bike/ped trail system similar to the Razorback Greenway. The NWA Study Tour is beneficial because it explains the ins and outs of the trail system. It highlights the economic advantages in both tourism and attracting not only businesses, but young professionals. They also shows how developing a biking culture aids in the success of the trail system. Metroplan encouraged its members to take its governing Bodies on this tour. Maumelle was quick to jump on this opportunity and has already gone. Cabot is scheduled to go at the end of the month. I appreciate Mayor Young's willingness to take advantage of this grant to introduce City Council members to this progressive concept. MJHT

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**We will  
never forget.**

*Join us for a Memorial Service to Commemorate  
the 20th Anniversary of 9.11.2001.*

**8:30 a.m. | Friday, Sept. 10, 2021**  
**Sherwood Municipal Complex | 2201 E. Kiehl Ave.**

With Remarks by Bro. Tim McMinn, Sherwood Council Member

**For more information, call 501-835-5319.**

*SINCE I CANNOT ATTEND THIS FRIDAY MORNING DUE TO WORK,  
PLEASE LET ME REMEMBER & HONOR THOSE WHO LOST THEIR  
LIVES OR FAMILY MEMBERS ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001.*

*YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN*

*THANK YOU ALSO TO ALL THOSE WHO SERVED OR SENT FAMILY  
MEMBERS TO SERVE IN AFGHANISTAN & IRAQ POST 9/11.  
YOUR DEAR SACRIFICES AND SERVICE ARE ALSO REMEMBERED!*

*Mary Jo Heye-Townsell*