

Good Evening Sherwood!! And thank you for attending tonight's State of the City event here at our wonderful Sherwood Center for the Arts facility. I look forward to this event every year because it gives me an opportunity to talk about the great things happening in our community and to highlight some goals that I have as your Mayor for the year ahead. But before we get to the heart of my address, I have some important introductions and appreciation to express.

As always, let me start by recognizing my colleagues who serve together on our city council - councilors, will you please stand for a moment and be recognized. I appreciate all of the hard work and dedication of these fine citizen volunteers and it has been my privilege to work with them in the past and I look forward to continuing those relationships in the coming year ahead.

As Teddy Roosevelt once said

“Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing”

And this work, is work worth doing!

One of the most impactful lessons that I have learned as an elected official is the importance of relationships and partnerships with other government organizations in Washington County, the Portland region and statewide. So I would also like to recognize all of the elected officials from throughout our region and state who are with us tonight. Please stand (list)

If you could please give everyone attending from other communities a warm Sherwood welcome. Thank you for visiting our great community tonight.

Tonight's event could not have been possible without the support from our two major sponsors, Portland General Electric and Comcast. Thank you for your sponsorship and support. And speaking of the refreshments, how about a shout out to our local vendors helping tonight – Rallison Cellars, The Growler House, Tom's Wilsonville Catering Company and the Hungry Hero Dessert Company. Great job as always to these fine local businesses! And last but not least, thank you to the kids from SMJ Performing Arts who provided us with some great dance moves earlier this evening. I am always amazed at the talented youth within our community and this was just a snapshot.

Tonight we come together for the State of the City Address. Recently I was asked, "What is a "State of the City Address?". As is the longstanding tradition, at the beginning of each new year, mayors all over Washington County, our state and our nation host events such as this to give their citizens an accounting of the progress the city government has made in the year past and give

a forecast and a visioning of the things to come in the year ahead. Now, I have to boast that I was one of the Washington County mayors with foresight that scheduled this event AFTER the massive ice and snowstorm, but I can't take complete credit for that great timing.

In my first term as your Mayor, I presented my two annual addresses during regular city council meetings and put the video online so all interested citizens could participate. This was effective and served the purpose of creating a tradition not held before in the City of Sherwood. But, it is customary among Mayors in our region to hold a separate event, so this year I chose to highlight our wonderful City amenity, the Sherwood Center for the Arts for this special event. Of course, I hope this becomes an annual tradition right here in the future. This is an opportunity for me as your Mayor to talk about the general state of our community and the important projects and initiatives that I'd like to see happen in 2017!

I am about to tell you something that many in this room already know and that is the state of our city is very strong! In many different ways, Sherwood is consistently identified as one of the best small towns in America. A community with great schools, whether it is our public schools within our Sherwood School District or private schools such as St. Paul Lutheran or St. Francis. Sherwood residents place high value on education for their kids and we are very fortunate to be a community of great schools. With the overwhelming support of the Sherwood voters, an important project has already begun. I am speaking, of course, about the development of a new high school campus for Sherwood along with the ultimate conversion of a number of existing schools into new uses. While these bond projects are the responsibility of the Sherwood School District, the City of Sherwood is an important partner as their various plans turn into actual construction projects in 2017 and beyond. City staff has already been an active, engaged partner since the bond passed a

few months ago and we are committed to providing the assistance needed to meet the districts schedule to open the doors to the new Sherwood High School in September 2020. With so many moving pieces like a large complex puzzle, it will certainly be a challenge but I am confident that we can get it done together.

We are also a safe community in so many ways! Certainly the men and women within the Sherwood Police Department play a major role in maintaining this strong sense of safety, but it is also due to the residents and business owners themselves who look out for each other and take pride within the community. And finally, we are a community of caring people that are actively involved with building up Sherwood, whether within their own church community or in their support of non-profits such as Helping Hands Food Bank or American Legion.

But like any community, Sherwood faces challenges as we grow and develop and many of the major projects that I will highlight tonight is in response to those challenges.

Sherwood continues to grow and develop in many ways. New homes continue to be built in our community adding to our existing inventory of housing. In 2016, 76 new single-family home permits were issued within our city. While such growth is certainly higher than in the depths of the housing recession, our growth pales to the tremendous levels that we experienced fifteen years ago when we were one of the fastest growing cities in Oregon. Our increasing challenge within the housing market relates to affordability, making it more difficult for seniors to downsize here or for our kids to afford to live in the community where they were raised. Of course, this issue is not unique to Sherwood as the Portland region continues to experience some of the highest growth in housing costs within our nation. City Council members are very concerned and engaged in searching

for possible remedies for this challenge. This issue, along with other important growth related issues will be thoroughly discussed with the community as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. One of our top priorities for the year ahead is the update to our City's Comprehensive Plan. This important land use plan will help us to retain the many attributes that make Sherwood such an attractive city as we continue to grow and develop over the coming years. It will help guide future Planning Commissions and City Councils to reach decisions about development applications. But we cannot successfully complete this project without citizen input during the process. During our recently completed Sherwood West planning project, we received tremendous levels of input from current and future residents and property owners. I invite everyone again to participate in the Comp Plan Update over the coming year so we can develop a plan that reflects the vision, opinions and perspectives of our citizens. As a community, we need to define the future of Sherwood and not let developers do it in our absence.

Another sign of a healthy city is a strong business environment. Just this morning at the Westside Economic Alliance breakfast, Jonathan Schleuter from Washington County referenced the most recent unemployment statistic for the City of Sherwood as being the lowest in Washington County at 3%. We continue to see growth in our business sector with new businesses and expanded businesses opening in both our historic Old Town area and our major commercial areas along Highway 99 and Tualatin-Sherwood Roads. In fact, I want to highlight one of our newest businesses that is about to open in Old Town who is here tonight and that is Rallison Cellars. Rallison will be opening up their very first tasting room in the next few months on Railroad Street. This is another sign of the growing influence of the wine industry within the Sherwood area as we truly develop into the gateway to wine country from Portland. Rallison Cellars, we wish you the very best as you increase your investment within the Sherwood community!

Certainly one of the more challenging aspects of living or working in the Sherwood area is our increasingly congested major roads and highways. Whether it is State-owned and maintained Highway 99 or the County-owned Tualatin Sherwood/Roy Rogers Road, rush hour can be quite frustrating as drivers attempt to get through and around our community. Fortunately, the long-planned 124th Avenue project is moving forward in construction by Washington County with a planned completion in 2018. Besides providing another alternative route for commuters and truck traffic between I-5 and the Sherwood/Tualatin industrial areas, we anticipate major industrial and commercial development in 2017 and beyond in the Tonquin Employment Area. This will translate into more local jobs and a better diversified tax base for Sherwood, which currently relies primarily upon its residential sector as our tax base. As your Mayor, I will continue to support our partners at Washington County in their efforts to begin construction of the widening of Tualatin-Sherwood Road, currently

delayed due to litigation and in the improvements to Elwert Road and Highway 99 near the Elks property. These are critical projects to help alleviate traffic congestion that have been funded by the county that we hope to see actual construction occurring in the next 18 to 24 months. I want to thank our partners at Washington County for providing funding for these important projects that will help alleviate traffic congestion in Sherwood.

While the update to the Comprehensive Plan is our top priority, we will continue to invest in a variety of projects in 2017 and early 2018 that will enhance the quality of life here.

As an example of such a project - The long-awaited update to Woodhaven Park is nearly complete with permanent restrooms, a new picnic shelter, basketball court and off street parking. And of course, the return of the beloved plastic trucks to the sandbox in the coming weeks!

Another project on the horizon is a permanent bathroom facility for Cannery Square which is going through the review process with the Planning Commission and should be constructed this summer. This will replace the temporary port-a-potty that has been utilized since the popular town square opened in 2012.

I am excited to announce that plans are also progressing to develop a second dog park facility that will be flat and chipped for year-round use. This will alleviate the frustration that our many dog owners have with our first dog park in Snyder Park that is certainly wonderful during the dry summer months, but has been closed for the rainy winter season over the past few years. Rain, in Oregon? Who knew? Our goal is to open this second dog park before next winter season.

And last but certainly not least, we have dusted off the original skate park plans for the city-owned property next to the Sherwood Recreational Center as operated by the YMCA. We have new

updated construction cost estimates for the skate park and construction dollars will be incorporated into next year's city budget. Our goal is to seek Planning Commission approval in the fall so we can submit a complete grant application to the Oregon State Parks and Recreation program for possible state funding in early 2018. If everything goes smoothly, construction on the skate park would take place in the summer of 2018.

All of these community amenities are funded out of a combination of development-generated System Development Charges and our healthy financial reserves. As your Mayor, I greatly appreciate the ongoing strong financial management of our city over the years, including the contributions of our Budget Committee each year, which enables us to chip away at these long-planned, but not yet implemented, projects.

I am going to shift a little here and talk about one of my many passions that I share with Sherwood residents, and that is a

strong belief in supporting both our veterans and currently serving members of the military. As a result of this core value, I am excited to discuss three different projects that I would like to see happen within Sherwood over the coming year.

The first project has been initiated by a wonderful group of Sherwood citizens who recently approached our City for assistance and support. They are embarking on a privately-funded effort to replicate a street banner program that you may have seen in Beaverton along Murray Boulevard. These banners highlight and honor local residents that are currently serving our nation in the armed forces. The City will partner with this new effort by providing the crews to hang similar banners on street poles on a soon to be announced major street within Sherwood. The preliminary design for the Sherwood banners has already been completed and program details are being developed by this citizen group. Watch for additional information and how

you can donate to help bring this project to life in the coming weeks on the city's website and social media channels.

So while the banner program honors our men and women who are currently serving our nation, my second project is one that honors our residents that have already served our nation in the past. Within Old Town Sherwood, we have a beautiful Veterans Memorial Park near the Historical Society. This park contains a memorial honoring Sherwood residents that served our nation during World War II. I am challenging our city leadership and our community to develop additional ways to honor our residents who served in other wars such as Korea and Vietnam to help make this important memorial park reflective of the sacrifices made across generations in Sherwood. Just as the banner program is largely being developed through the efforts of private citizens, I envision this effort to update Veterans Memorial Park to be a combination of private and public contributions.

My last project that is focused on military veterans is a much bigger effort that I discovered as part of my involvement in the Oregon Mayors Association. Within our large state, we have only two facilities called the Oregon Veterans Home. The first one opened in 1997 in the Dalles and the second recently opened in Lebanon. So what is the Oregon Veterans Home? Described as “the place where honor lives”, these residential, rehabilitation and skilled care facilities are available to veterans, their spouses and parents who had a child die while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Why do I bring this type of facility up tonight? Quite simply, I want Sherwood to be home to one of these important facilities for our veterans! Now I know this is a big goal that will take a lot of effort and coordination with different state and federal partners, but there is currently no Oregon Veterans Home within the Portland metropolitan region and I want to change that fact. Please join me as your Mayor to help achieve that vision and bring an Oregon Veterans Home to Sherwood!

Finally I want to remind everyone of an important date that will occur early in 2018. On February 10, 2018, our city will celebrate its Quasquicentennial, or more simply, the 125th anniversary of our original incorporation as a city in 1893. In other words, it's a significant birthday for Sherwood. And just like we did for our centennial year back in 1993, I believe we should come together as a community and develop a variety of ways of celebrating this key milestone. Stay tuned as we begin planning for this important celebration in 2018! And I want to send a huge thank you to longtime resident Alice Thornton for bringing our upcoming birthday to my attention.

Before I conclude, I need to thank all of the people who make it possible for me to do this job. A special thank you to my Mom and Stepdad Les and adopted grandpa Alan Pearson who drive, feed, study with and corral my two active teenagers when I am serving the citizens of Sherwood. Additionally, a thank you to all of the neighbors, friends, team parents, and church family who help me

every day navigate carpools and meeting schedules so that I can serve as your mayor. I truly could not do this without so many of you.

And finally, I want to give a special thank you to my two children, Alaina and Declan - who I do this with and for. Together we have planted trees at the One Tree for All program, cleaned up garbage at the Trashpolooza and Adopt a Road projects, served food at the Onion Festival and dusted shelves at the Sherwood Library. We have learned that – serving together is growing together - as a family and as a community. Thank you guys for your support and service.

Now I'd like to share a video that illustrates what I believe Sherwood is all about.

(show video)

It is my hope that here, in the City of Sherwood, you feel welcome, valued, appreciated and encouraged. It is my great honor, and privilege, to serve as your mayor and I thank you for the opportunity to Shout out Sherwood wherever I go. I look forward to the year ahead. There is so much more work to be done, and I am honored to continue, with your support, to Move Sherwood Positively Forward