



January 28, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I had known for some time that I wanted to work in the public sector as a city planner although I did not know how I was going to get a “real job” after I finished college. I graduated last winter from the University of Oregon with a Bachelor of Arts in Planning, Public Policies and Management. Last December as I was frantically trying to decide what I would do with myself after an early graduation I stumbled upon Dr. Baker and Dr. Ankrom’s Local Government Internship Program. The program was scheduled to take place in the City of Chippewa Falls and Eau Claire County, Wisconsin. I had an internship the previous summer and I thought that this might be a good way to explore local government a little more.

Soon after I read about the program on the ICMA’s website I called Dr. Baker to get more information. When I called I was concerned about being eligible since I had just graduated and I was not a student at Wittenberg. To my delight I was an eligible candidate for the program. I stayed in contact with Dr. Baker until the big day came and I was actually going to Wisconsin, to be a part of a program from another university in a state that I never thought I would visit.

Luckily, I was accepted as one of the Wittenberg students although I had a lot to prove being the first non-Wittenberg participant that the program had ever had. The program gave me hands-on experience in a planning office as well as the background knowledge that I needed to understand local government. I wrote staff reports and prepared presentations as well as a number of other tasks that a county planner would do. When I left Wisconsin I did not know how valuable the experience had been. I knew that I had grown as an individual, met new people and I had learned a lot about planning.

I realized how beneficial the program had been when I interviewed for a temporary assistant planner position in the Land Use and Development Department at Washington County, Oregon. The knowledge that I gained through the Local Government Internship Program directly related to the tasks that I would do for the county. Those skills helped me to get the job which in turn helped start my career. Since the position with the County was only temporary and I was eager to find a permanent position I decided to take a similar position at the City of Sherwood, Oregon. I have not been with the city for long, but I know that I will continue to grow as a planner as I continue to learn more about the profession and local governments.

Sincerely,

Zoe Monahan
Assistant Planner
City of Sherwood