

# “If I Were Mayor...”

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By **Anthony Cote**

If I were mayor of Lake Oswego, I would focus on improving sustainability and building an infrastructure that supports a greener future. This can be done with the cooperation of the private citizens of Lake Oswego, local government, and small businesses. Steps include promoting eco-friendly transportation, producing regenerative energy, and building energy-efficient facilities. I would take action to move Lake Oswego to a more globe-friendly place.

First, I would have electric car chargers installed in public parking lots so that people could charge their cars while eating, shopping, and enjoying other Lake Oswego amenities. This would also encourage people to buy electric cars, which in turn, helps save the environment. Setting up electric car charging stations would also give the citizens free charge if they visit the amenities here in our town.

A second initiative is to make sure bike lanes are safe and clearly marked so that people would feel safe, and be open to the idea of riding bikes to local stores or just to have a good time. If people ride their bikes more often, fewer cars are on the road, therefore leading to fewer greenhouse gas emissions from combustion engine vehicles. This would also inspire people to be more active and outside more of the time. In addition to safe bike lanes, I would set up bike racks and locking systems around stores and restaurants in the town of Lake Oswego.

Another idea is exploring the possibility of using the Lake Oswego dam to produce hydroelectricity, and reroute the energy to stores and businesses that meet energy-efficient criteria. Providing this financial incentive encourages businesses to stay actively involved in the process of making our town “greener.”

As mayor, I would encourage citizens to install solar panels on their homes. I would meet with Home Owners Associations about easing restrictions on solar panel approvals. At this time, I would also provide information about the benefits of solar panels and financial incentives. Adding solar panels to the city hall and other city-owned buildings would serve as a role model for private citizens. This would not only make a profit for the people of Lake Oswego but also introduce the idea of electric furnaces, air conditioning, and cars.

Finally, new and remodeled buildings must follow a stricter set of rules and regulations that all revolve around the idea of producing less unnecessary gases and waste. To ease and encourage this process, the City of Lake Oswego would have an expert on staff to guide businesses through this step. This role would be an engineer specializing in city planning with a focus on incorporating Earth-friendly designs. Upon request, business owners would be able to meet with the city-employed engineer free of charge.

Having strong leadership is important to implement these changes, and get people and businesses on board in a positive manner. As mayor, I can provide this support, and gain the peoples' trust to transition smoothly through this process. Through all of these actions, Lake Oswego has the potential to become a greener and more environment-friendly town.