

If I Were Mayor

By Leuca Wanford

Mayors are a key part of a city. They are the figurehead and the image of the city. A Mayor listens to the community and works with the council and the various departments of the city to make a better town for the citizens. Mayors bring ideas and energy to the city and work hard to make our city a better place for everyone.

If I were the Mayor of Lake Oswego, I would work hard to make changes that greatly benefit our community and environment. I would do so by ensuring every school has safe sidewalks and bike accessibility, advocating for clean energy, constructing solar panels on city buildings, and educating our citizens on modern topics and issues.

The first thing I would do as Mayor would be to ensure that every school in the school district has safe sidewalks and bike-accessible ways to get to school. To do this, I would first survey our citizens asking them if there were any issues with paths near their houses. If the results said anything about unsafe or inefficient sidewalks or bike routes, I would work hard with the Department of Engineering to construct or improve the sidewalks and bike routes. Students having safe ways to get to school should always be a top priority, as this means they won't have to walk or bike on the road anymore which puts them in danger due to car traffic. Sidewalk accessibility also encourages people to walk instead of drive, and reducing driving will decrease greenhouse emissions, noise pollution, and traffic congestion.

The next priority I would tackle as Mayor would be to keep encouraging the use of clean energy. I would run campaigns through neighborhood associations, the LO Chamber of Commerce, and the LO Review to encourage people to switch both their homes and businesses to clean energy. Additionally, I would work to install solar panels onto publicly owned buildings. This means city departments, schools, recreational spaces, and more would be powered by clean energy. We are already doing this with City Hall, Lakeridge Middle School, and the Maintenance

Center on Jean Road, and I would be excited to continue the trend of using clean energy. These actions would greatly decrease our city's carbon footprint, allow us to act as a model of sustainability to other municipalities, and improve our city and the world for generations to come.

In addition to updating our energy infrastructure on publicly owned buildings, I would also increase the awareness of our city's citizens about modern topics. As Mayor, I would host more community events. These would spread awareness for a variety of topics, such as Black History Month, Women's History Month, Labor Day, Veterans Day, and so many more. We could also use these events to raise awareness about public safety, climate change, mental health, and social justice. It is important to raise awareness about these topics because they are serious modern issues that the citizens of Lake Oswego should be educated on. In addition, these community events could create a set of core values that will follow our citizens into the future.

At the end of the year, at the State of the City Address, I would remind everyone what the city had accomplished: installing and improving school sidewalks and bike accessibility, advocating for and installing clean energy alternatives, and educating our community through public events on modern issues and important awareness months and dates. With these changes, I hope to see safer children, fewer cars in school zones, less carbon emissions in our city, more energy generated in our city, cleaner energy, kinder citizens, and a more supportive, inclusive community.