

# If I Was Mayor

## Megan Rim

Most of the time, if people asked me what I would do if I was mayor, I would give them a blank stare. But thinking about it, I might have a few ideas. I learned that mayors preside over the elected city councils in their cities and are also responsible for the welfare of the city. Lake Oswego doesn't have many problems. But it isn't perfect. I asked myself, if I was mayor, how could I help the community and the place we live? That's a question I had to think about. How can I come up with solutions that help everybody?

I first found a problem. Homelessness, hunger, foster care, and shelters, aren't easy things to fix. One of the top problems for the homeless is the lack of ability to purchase a home, and homeless people don't like shelters, because they feel trapped. Nowhere to go, and no escape. It's honestly very depressing. If I was mayor, I would fund more fundraisers and organizations for housing the homeless. Rapid rehousing is the best way to connect people to housing and services, so I would fundraise and organize organizations for rapid rehousing. Rapid rehousing also helps people get back into a situation where they can return to permanent housing through rental assistance.

Lake Oswego has some housing organizations, but not enough. If I was mayor, I would raise awareness and fund organizations for the homeless, helping people and letting them feel safe. Lake Oswego doesn't have much affordable housing, but if we funded more organizations for rapid rehousing, we could get people off the streets and into homes. Also if we made billboards and fundraisers, and fund them using taxes as well, it might make a big impact to help. I know that the mayor is already pushing to do things like this, but I feel like I would do that as well. Doing that, the community of Lake Oswego would feel more connected, cleaner, and happier.

Anyways, homelessness isn't the only problem in Lake Oswego. Foster care and shelters are problems too. There are too many little hands that need help and too few people willing to foster or adopt. If I was mayor, I would strengthen families from the origin, support caseworkers, help fund foster care systems, educate the public about foster care by putting information about it into our Lake Oswego education system, and make sure that people knew that help was needed. It doesn't take opening a house for a child, it matters even just to visit them once a week and help them.

Studies show that one-third of former foster care children had or have mental disorders. Foster kids are real, with real emotions, and they need help. If I was mayor, I would help fund

and encourage the people of Lake Oswego to help, therapy, support groups, and a toy or two, can go a long way to helping a child out of a mental disorder like depression and different types of abuse. I would fund for therapists to come weekly to have a session with a few kids, talk with them, and be with them.

I would encourage people to help, if not foster, and recognize the people who do. If I was mayor, I would reward and acknowledge the people who try to help bring a better community to Lake Oswego. Those people are the people who bring the community together, though not as well known as the mayor, they care about the welfare of the city as well and want to make our home a better place. If I was mayor, I wouldn't care about being in a fairly high position if I didn't do anything to help our city become the best city it can be. What is the point of having a position where you can help people, but don't? The welfare of my city will be one of my top priorities, along with making sure that our city stays a well-connected community.

Anyways, another problem is shelters. One of the top problems in shelters is that many dogs get euthanized, and many dogs in shelters have disorders from being abused or left to die. This is a very sad problem, and though many shelters do try their best to make the best of what they have, shelters have limited resources, and it is hard for them to sustain the dogs and animals in the shelter. Especially since many shelter animals have health problems, and need more help and care that may be able to be given.

If I was mayor, I would raise and spread awareness of the problems faced in shelters, and I would encourage people to donate dry food to shelters, so they don't have to spend precious money on dog food and can focus on the animal's medical bills or other necessities. I would make fundraisers and spread the word, encouraging people to acknowledge our lost furry friends. I would acknowledge donors who help the shelters, and if everyone donated even just a little bit, it could go a long way to helping the shelters grow so they have enough space, time, and money for more animals and they won't have to euthanize as many animals. If I was mayor, I would want to make a difference for everybody, not just the two-legged kind.

So, in the end, I can guarantee you I have thought about what I would do if I was mayor. Now, if someone asks me, I will have an answer. To summarize, I would like to help people and make a difference in their lives. But here's the thing, I wouldn't have to be mayor to do that. Anybody can help people and make them happy. Anybody can help change the community they live in for the better. There's no difference if I was mayor, or me. I want to change things for the better either way, I want to change this world, make it a greater place for everybody.