

“If I Were Mayor, I Would...”

The mayor is a very important person in a community. They handle council meetings, manage our taxes, and supervise our departments, but their most important job by far is making sure that their city is a safer, healthier, happier place that people are proud to call home, and if I were the mayor, that is what I would try to do.

First of all, I think that in Happy Valley, we are building too many houses. If I were the mayor, I would limit the development. I understand that houses are important, and I agree that we need them, especially for our growing population, but I think that we are overbuilding. Oregon is known for its natural splendor, and I feel like we are taking away from the beauty of our town by building on so many green spaces that could be used as parks or recreational areas. Having more green spaces can make people more active, and is thought to reduce people's stress levels and depression. Shouldn't we live up to our name?

Secondly, I would create some more community events. As I mentioned earlier, our town is growing, but I don't want to lose that warm, small-town feel. I think that we should have some more community events to bring people together and help them get to know each other. I really enjoy the Fourth of July parade each year, and I would like to add a few more events similar to that. Yet, a lot of our community events focus on kids and families. I think we should have some community events that appeal to the elderly, or take place in nursing homes so our older population can be included and involved. I think that by having community events, by simply interacting with others in the community, we can learn to look past our differences and become stronger as a town.

I would also try to encourage relationships between the government and the people. In this day and age, a lot of people complain about the government and other officials, like police officers and firefighters. My dad is a police officer, and sometimes people are mean to him, but he still faithfully does his best to protect the people. I think it would be nice if the citizens could really get to know the people who serve on their behalf, promoting unity. As the mayor, I would try to be a good role model for the citizens. I would listen to the people's ideas and act according to everyone's best interests. I would do my best to be a mayor who is responsible, inspirational, and passionate about their people.

If I were mayor, I would also try to improve our schools. Oregon's schools are ranked at number thirty-three out of fifty for our education, which I think is a problem. Our graduation rates are currently at 79%, which is one of the lowest in the country,

although our rates are improving. I believe that it is very important to educate kids, since the next generation is the future of our town.

I have many different ideas for what I would do as mayor, but there is a common theme throughout it all: community. My goal above all would be to bring the city together and to celebrate our differences instead of letting them divide us. I want Happy Valley to be a truly happy place full of people who care about one another, people who listen to one another, and people who inspire each other. This is my vision for Happy Valley, and I hope that someday it becomes a reality.