

If I Were Mayor

If I were mayor, I would take several steps to help create a cleaner environment. As mayor, I would be responsible for the future of our community and being environmentally responsible is the first step.

One way I would help my community is by establishing a better recycling program. Currently, in the city of West Des Moines and many other cities in Iowa, recycling bins are collected every other week, while garbage is collected weekly. As a result, in many households, the recycling bin overflows in that amount of time, so many previously recyclable items end up being placed in trash bins and eventually travel to landfills. For example, people use items like soda cans, paper towel rolls, newspapers, cardboard boxes, junk mail, plastic water bottles, milk jugs, peanut butter jars, magazines, and more without a second thought. All of these everyday items can be recycled, and usually are, until the bin is too full and the items are tossed into the garbage, causing all of our hard recycling work to go down the drain and into the landfill. To address this important issue, as mayor, I would change the waste pick-up schedule to encourage environmental responsibility by collecting the recycling bins every time the garbage is picked up each week. This would benefit both the residents of Iowa, as well as our environment worldwide. Citizens already know how to recycle-- they just need the tools to do it correctly.

Another way I would help my community create a cleaner environment if I were mayor is by raising awareness about the negative effects of driving cars. I would encourage people to reduce their carbon footprint by walking or riding their bikes instead of traveling in gas consuming vehicles that pollute the air and contribute to harmful carbon emissions. To do this, I would create a reward system where people could keep track of how many times they used an alternative transportation method. In order to promote participation in this event, residents would be provided access to a bike so they could fulfill their goals. The residents who decreased their previous carbon emissions by more than 50% each year would win a prize, such as a new electric bike that would help them continue to keep the environment clean.

One final way I would help my community is by supporting a state-wide single-use plastic ban. As mayor, I would be in a position to argue my case to other community leaders in the state of Iowa. This would help convince restaurants and businesses to minimize the amount of plastic straws, silverware, and plastic bags they use. Billions of these disposable plastic items pollute our oceans every year, and the ban would help reduce the amount of pollution dramatically.

If I were mayor, I would establish a better recycling program, encourage people to use alternative transportation methods, and enact a state-wide single-use plastic ban. Taking these steps would help my community create a better environment for future generations.