

Nora [REDACTED]

English 7th

OMA Ashland mayor contest

Willow Wind CLC

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If I were mayor

If I were mayor, I would try my hardest to listen to all those who give their ideas. I would make sure everyone knows that whoever they are they have a place in this world and when they share their voice people will listen. I will make sure that every law that is passed will be well thought out and benefit everyone. I would face the well-known issue of houselessness. I want to make it so everyone can be at ease and know they will not be woken up by the police telling them that they must pack their belongings and leave. If I were mayor, I would not promise to fix every problem for I know that is impossible, but I would try my hardest to give the neediest people of Ashland shelter in the wonderful town they deserve.

Houselessness is one of the most well-known problems in Ashland. There are constantly around 200 people who are unhoused just in Ashland. These people are part of our community and deserve better. They deserve to thrive in places where they feel safe and not afraid. Many community members believe if we drive these people away from our

town by consistently narrowing down the places where they can sleep, it will solve the problem. But we need to find a place for these people. No matter what someone's income is everyone deserves somewhere to live. If we push these people away, they will just have to go to a neighboring town which obviously will not fix the problem. People often think getting houseless people off our streets will fix the issue. But when you think a little more, you realize that these people are going through something much harder. If I were mayor, I would be determined to find a solution that helps everybody live safely and honestly in Ashland.

Next, I would try to increase the population of younger people in Ashland. We are incredibly lucky to have Southern Oregon University because it brings in many people from the ages of 18-25. Nevertheless, the average age of a citizen in Ashland is over 50. We need to bring in more families with young kids. This would help the school district immensely because we would start getting more money from the state if we had more students. We could create a system in which young families could take in a homeless person and help them through whatever challenging times they are going through. Whether that is drug addictions, gambling addictions or even loss of a loved one. Any of these unfortunate events could lead people to being unhoused. Young families could help these people and help get them back on the right track. Now how would this benefit the family who is helping? Well, the city could offer special deals to the family for decreased taxes and even discounts on food and housing. This would make Ashland more affordable for families which would increase the number of students in the school district, bringing in more money for the schools. So, this system would help with all three of our issues.

Because so many people are living on the streets of Ashland many areas of our town are scattered with trash. This should be cleaned up, but it often seems that there is no one to complete the task. If I were mayor, I would make a service-learning system where teenagers in need of jobs could be up for higher to clean up public areas. Unfortunately, our streets are becoming dirtier and dirtier with the increasing houseless population. Ashland has some of the most beautiful parks in Oregon, so we need to keep them clean and free of trash. Handing these responsibilities to the young people in Ashland will help improve the cleanliness of the parks and teach them the responsibilities of being part of a community.

In conclusion if I were mayor, I would make housing more affordable. I would try to increase the number of young families in Ashland. Ashland needs more affordable housing which I would figure out how to lower those prices. Young families could bring in an unhoused person and get decreased taxes. The unhoused person could live in a guest room or ADU. Families often have young kids who would go to the schools. This would bring in more money for the school district. Lastly, high school students could get hired by the city to clean up the parks and streets. If I were mayor, I would try to make Ashland a better place for everyone.