

If I were Mayor

If I were mayor of my city, the first thing I would do is pedestrianize the main shopping streets and also the old part of town.

Studies in Germany show that pedestrianization increases business in 80% of shops and in 60% of restaurants, although it has a bad effect on hotels. In Copenhagen, pedestrianization had a very positive effect on society. People left their cars at home, became more friendly with their fellow citizens and revitalized the centre of the Danish capital.

Another effect of pedestrianization is making the streets safer for children and old people and so I would provide more street furniture and children's areas. In the pedestrianized zones, it also causes a greater variety of shops to appear as well as markets and performances by street artists. Pedestrianization reduces air and noise pollution too.

To reduce air pollution even more, I would provide free parking for electric vehicles next to the city centre.

The next thing I would do is build a network of bike lanes all over the city, just like Mayor Enrique Peñaloca in Bogota. Doing this quadrupled the amount of people using bikes in Colombia's capital. I would also integrate bus stops with safe places to park bicycles. Intermodal passenger transport is absolutely vital to smooth flow and safety within a city and I think it is something mayors and mayoresses everywhere need to study.

After that, I would introduce a community bicycle programme, similar to Paris and Barcelona. This means that people can use public bikes for free and then leave them in a special stand. Paris now has public bike stands every 300 metres and more than 20,000 public bicycles.

When I finished that, I would pass a law saying that all buildings must install solar panels, solar water heaters and wind turbines in order to reduce the city's carbon footprint.

The last thing I would do is create green corridors which allow animals to move freely between the city and the country without being killed by cars.

I realise my programme would probably be very unpopular with a lot of people and I think I would lose the next election. However, if I finished my programme to help make my city more environmentally-friendly, I would be happy.

376 words

Grammar: the second conditional

