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Central Mountains Regional Winner  
Salida, CO

## **If I Were Mayor**

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If I were mayor I would inform the kids in my community about the significant need for municipal government. In addition, I would show the kids of Salida places in town that could be improved by city government.

In order to do that, I would take the children on a field trip, showing them different places in our town that could use attention. I would show them policemen, fire protection, roads, and our library. I would have them see how each of these things are crucial to our community. Next, I would have them take a moment to picture our town without any of these things.

I anticipate, by doing this children will see our towns needs and why we appreciate municipal government. Then I hope they'll explain to their parents what they learned. So when voting time rolls around, people will vote with an understanding of Salida, that was never there.

First, I would have the kids inspect "H" street. I'd show them potholes. Then, we'd drive over the potholes and cracks. I'd ask them what they'd think about riding bikes over them!!! Also I'd remind them if it were not for road workers (a large part of municipal government) all our roads would look like this and not be safe.

Next, a trip to the Salida Hot Springs Pool for an examination of the locker rooms. We would brainstorm ways to raise money to fix the locker rooms. Lodging taxes, fund raisers, and many more ideas would surface! Then the reasonable suggestions would be taken back and presented to the city council.

Following this, it would be lunch time! I'd present the model of a new recreation center, (a smart choice for many reasons). First, it would pay itself off after a few years. It would make Salida more enjoyable. It would be an outstanding place for kids to hang out, have fun, and exercise! We'd discuss having fields, courts, a pool, and a recreation center in one place!

If we decided to follow through on all these things, we would have support from city government! Our exceptional city government consists of many important people. It's crucial that kids see the importance of these people.

Next, we'd take a trip to our local police station! I would have the police talk to the kids about their jobs and why they are important. Then, we would all envision Salida without police. In addition, I would display a Power Point of what happens to a town without police men and women.

Another important type of municipal government is fire protection. I would have the firemen and women take us on a tour of the houses they were unable to save as well as houses that survived. Then we would all draw Salida without fire protection. How many houses and lives would have been lost??? Hopefully, the kids of Salida will find the value of municipal employees.

Now for our library! Some people say you can judge how healthy a town is by their library! I want to share this with Salida kiddos.

WHY is city government important? It is needed so we can live together healthily, safely, and peacefully. In order for it to work, we must all have an understanding of what we can do as individuals. It is even more essential for kids to act. WHY? Because "Kids are the future." In order for our future to be bright, we must all understand and work together to create the community we want.