

POSITIONS OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF RIVERSIDE

Positions of the League of Women Voters of Riverside, along with the positions of League of Women Voters of California and League of Women Voters of the United States, represent our stand on public policy issues and are the basis for action. Positions are established or amended following through study and the consensus of membership.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

County Government

LWVR supports the following recommendations concerning county commissions, boards and committees:

- (1) except as required by State Law, such bodies should be advisory and report directly to the Board of Supervisors;
- (2) the responsibility of each body should be re-evaluated annually to carefully outline and describe meetings, reports and membership;
- (3) vacancies should be made public and members should be reappointed or replaced at the expiration of terms;
- (4) members should represent a cross-section of citizens.

County Planning

LWVR supports the following:

- (1) the concept that urbanization policies/community standards of the county be consistent with the city standards when land lies within a sphere of influence;
- (2) county land-use maps consistent with a city's general plan for land within a sphere of influence;
- (3) formal communication procedures between the city and the county for dealing with land use and zoning within a sphere of influence;
- (4) the review of the county's policy of urbanization to discourage the development of isolated and inefficient communities in unincorporated areas of the county not in a sphere of influence.

City Government

LWVR supports the council-manager form of government as provided in the city charter.

We recommend charter changes that strengthen the existing form of government and maintain or establish the checks and balances necessary to protect the public interest; and we oppose those changes that could weaken the council-manager system.

City Planning

LWVR supports long range planning for the future development of Riverside through the following:

- (1) support a revised Riverside general plan with population projections scaled downward in consideration of air and water quality, sewage limitations and other physical constraints;
- (2) adequate staff and funding for both intermediate and long-range planning;
- (3) review of the general plan on a continuing basis with significant public participation;
- (4) enlargement and improvement of the park system with regional, community, neighborhood and arroyo parks;
- (5) preservation of Victoria Avenue;
- (6) freeway routing with the least disruption to existing city development;

- (7) support of grocery and service oriented shopping within neighborhoods in response to needs as determined by neighborhood residents, with stringent controls on design, signs and landscaping;
- (8) support of a balanced transportation system;
- (9) support of appropriate joint use of government lands;
- (10) an immediate review by the City of Riverside of its sphere of influence and at regular 3-5 year intervals thereafter. Sphere of influence designations should be determined on lands prior to development/development plans where possible.

Riverside Downtown

LWVR supports the concept of the downtown area as a center for commercial, governmental, and cultural activities. These activities however should not preclude residential uses. A downtown plan should include:

- (1) traffic circulation, parking and transportation plans capable of accommodating future growth;
- (2) a provision for open spaces such as parks or mini-parks;
- (3) the inclusion of residential uses of various densities, purposes;
- (4) overall densities sufficient to encourage energy efficiency and the use of mass transportation;
- (5) consideration of the city's cultural heritage through preservation or restoration of existing historic buildings and architectural compatibility of new buildings;
- (6) periodic revision and evaluation of the plan by a committee which includes citizens.

Land Use, City and County of Riverside

In order to protect the quality of life in Riverside, LWVR supports controls on growth through comprehensive land use planning and management and substantial public participation in the decisions that determine the rate and nature of growth. LWVR believes governmental decisions affecting land use must be based, to the extent permitted by law, on the information contained in the Environmental Impact Report and strict adherence to applicable zoning ordinances and a policy of timed sequential development. Both professional and citizen viewpoints should be presented to the City Council and Board of Supervisors when they are making a decision on matters of land use. LWVR supports and extensive county general plan with plan revisions and review every one to five years with citizen involvement in the review process.

Redevelopment

LWVR supports:

- (1) greater consideration of the total economic impact of development projects in the city of Riverside, including specific expenditure of 20% of the redevelopment funds for low income housing;
- (2) efforts to educate the public regarding the Redevelopment Agency and the use of increment financing;
- (3) accountability to the public and to the City Manager's office on the part of the Redevelopment Agency; and
- (4) pro-active planning for redevelopment project areas within the city.

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)

LWVR supports continuation of:

- (1) the concept of the independence of LAFCO to alleviate any perception of conflict of interests;
- (2) a full accounting of the costs of LAFCO in an independent budget;
- (3) the initiation of studies by LAFCO;
- (4) the selection of LAFCO representatives by member agencies;
- (5) terms of LAFCO representatives limited to two 4-year terms (8 years);
- (6) the rotation of seats among the member agencies.

Riverside Municipal Utilities, Electric Division

LWVR supports the concept of including other items besides cost of service in the utility rate structure. Such items include, but are not limited to, revenues for the city's general fund, the encouragement of conservation, peak load management, and social goals which have been identified during the rate setting process. Such inclusions should be disclosed to the rate payers.

LWVR supports the utility in seeking other sources of revenue as long as those activities benefit all consumers, promote the conservation of electricity, and ultimately reduces the cost of electric service.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Issues Relating to Women

LWVR recognizes the special needs of women in the area of child care, domestic violence and legal rights. Adequate attention must be paid to these issues in order for women to achieve equal rights.

In planning child care, child development should be emphasized with economy always considered. A variety of child care situations should be available to people of all levels of income to serve different needs and preferences.

LWVR supports the prevention of domestic violence and the protection of women should it occur. All levels of government, as well as private sources, should support such programs. We encourage the use of shelters and the use of counseling for the batterer, as well as the battered, as possible alternatives to jail.

LWVR discerns a need for women to be informed of their legal rights already achieved by law; and encourages the enforcement of laws relevant to women, including those concerning child and spousal support.

Issues Relating to Child Care

LWVR supports the following:

(1) child care facilities for low income parents should be subsidized by public funding and the funding should be provided by three levels of government: local, state, and federal or any combination thereof; and for low income parents, public agencies should cooperate with private enterprise in providing child care;

(2) employers should be encouraged to provide child care assistance for their employees;

(3) legislative restraints should be imposed on insurance rates in California for child care providers.

The problem caused by accelerating insurance rates could be alleviated by adoption of the following approaches: (1) state insurance; (2) limitations on court award damages; and (3) pooling of funds by groups on insurance companies.

Child care is the means of providing a safe and wholesome environment for a child during those times when the child's family cannot do for themselves. Adequate child care should be universally available.

Equal Opportunity

LWVR supports:

(1) complete public school integration;

(2) coordination of employment opportunity information;

(3) establishment of low-cost day care centers;

(4) improved vocational training opportunities.

LWVR supports and encourages local anti-poverty efforts. We also support the principle of equal opportunity to housing, with community action to alleviate substandard and segregated housing, including the adoption of a housing code and establishment of a separate housing department.

School Financing

LWVR supports:

- (1) sound financing of quality education for all;
- (2) construction and full use of functional school housing;
- (3) exploration of best ways to obtain and utilize school funds and property.

Criteria other than solely economic should be applied in providing schools.

Mental Health

LWVR supports:

- (1) full implementation of all services such as mandated by the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act with special emphasis on children's services;
- (2) community education and school involvement in early detection of problems in children;
- (3) coordination of all mental health and related services in the county.

Juvenile Justice

LWVR supports:

- (1) rehabilitation as the basic philosophy of juvenile justice;
- (2) the concept of a master plan which sets priorities for the expansion of existing facilities and developing expanded services;
- (3) increased delinquency prevention programs.

Transportation

LWVR supports the development of a transportation system in cooperation with surrounding cities which is accessible, convenient, flexible and multi-modal in nature, and which services the needs of the entire community. We support active encouragement of citizen participation in all phases of transportation planning.

LWVR also supports the use of transportation funds for programs which develop alternatives to the private automobile such as public transportation and an extended bicycle path system.

Open Space

LWVR supports the preservation of open space and recreational areas through a comprehensive growth management plan which includes available and appropriate tools and techniques.

LWVR supports a comprehensive plan for the preservation of greenbelts which addresses long-term goals. Greenbelts are defined as, but not limited to, open space; arroyos; hilltop areas; groves of trees; agricultural lands; linkages; parks; and bike paths. Preserved areas should be kept in perpetuity and protected from alteration.

LWVR supports:

- (1) the concept of reserving the option to make decisions on specific open space proposals as they arise; preservation of arroyo and hilltop areas; land adjoining Fairmount Park and groves of trees and agricultural land for smog abatement and other purposes;
- (2) the preservation of recreational areas near educational facilities;
- (3) the concept of linkages as an essential part of the open space plan;
- (4) planned residential developments that provide dwellings at a variety of prices and maximizes the preservation of open spaces;
- (5) the preservation of the Arlington Heights Citrus area in contiguous parcels.

Water

LWVR supports:

- (1) continued careful city planning for solving problems of water supply and threatened pollution, storage and water pressure, emergency preparedness;
- (2) increasing Riverside's self-reliance on local water supplies by all feasible methods with due consideration of cost and quality.

Parks and Recreation

LWVR believes that the city and county should continue in their efforts to develop comprehensive programs for the acquisition on a regular basis of park lands.

Unique and specialized parklands such as the Santa Ana River Regional Park should be conserved or developed as the case may be for uses consistent with their natural settings or their specific characteristics.

LWVR supports feasible development of the city recreation program to better serve community needs.

The quality of the Santa Ana River should be brought up to Federal Standards of "fishable" and "swimmable" which involves the cooperation of neighboring communities.

Note: Last updated in 2007.