

## LWVO LOCAL POSITIONS

[Note: For positions on a State and national level, please go to [LWVC](#) and [LWVUS](#)]

### **EDUCATION (1971, 1980, 2014, 2019)**

Support of measures to provide a system of quality education that is adequately financed and is responsive to the needs of *all* the children of Oakland, with the following objectives:

1) Review on an ongoing basis a strategic plan for Oakland public schools consisting of coordinated plans created by ongoing, broadly based committees representing administrators, teachers, community members, and students. Elements of these plans would include a clear definition of educational philosophy, a description of goals and priorities, and accountability for the following issues:

- instructional programs
- highly qualified teachers and administrators
- financing and budgeting
- community environment
- school facilities
- the relationship between District and other elements in the community

The strategic plan should reflect the total socio-economic condition of the city. The plan should address equity in the distribution of resources to school sites, especially between economically disadvantaged and more affluent neighborhoods, fostering improved multicultural respect and appreciation.

2) Promote the ability for individual schools, through incentives for principals and teachers, to increase parental involvement and develop educational plans geared to the needs of their school communities.

3) Develop curricula and teaching methods relevant to urban areas, provide adequate facilities and materials, and aid teachers in developing creative, innovative, and relevant curriculum and teaching methods.

4) Assure adequate construction and maintenance of school buildings.

5) Develop new sources of revenue to supplement revenue from property taxes.

6) Evaluate all the above with robust data collection, full transparency, and annual reports to the public.

### **RANKED CHOICE VOTING (2003)**

Ranked Choice Voting should be used in all elections involving more than two candidates for a single position.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (1970, 1993, 2001, 2011, 2022)**

In order to promote good government in Oakland which:

- effectively and efficiently makes decisions and sets policies,
  - achieves optimum responsiveness of the government to the people, and
  - facilitates communication between the government and the people it serves,
- the League of Women Voters of Oakland supports measures that promote the

following principles:

- transparency
- responsiveness
- meaningful citizen input
- adequate citizen access
- active legislature
- well formed commissions and committees
- adequate checks and balances between the elements of the government
- effective management, including good budget process and clear lines of staff supervision

*The following guidelines may be referred to when taking action on local government.*

### **Elaboration of principles:**

#### **I. Transparency**

- Readable and understandable reports, with one-page summaries for long reports
- Clear communication within the government, and between government officials and the public
- Clear lines of authority
- Accessible information

#### **II. Responsiveness**

- Accessible forums for citizen input that are convenient in time and location
- Good grievance mechanisms to ensure timely citizen input.
- Well publicized ways for public to give input

#### **III. Meaningful Citizen Input**

- Adequate time for input at hearings.
- "Watchdog" committees, inside and outside of government
- Mandatory constituency meetings

#### **IV. Adequate Citizen Access**

- Various well publicized avenues for access
- Active promotion of citizen involvement
- Readily available and accessible staff and committee reports
- Clear and well-defined regular information channels
- Promotion of Brown Act, Public Records Act, and Sunshine Ordinance, in the spirit as well as the letter of the laws

#### V. Active Legislature

- Odd number of councilpersons preferred
- Majority of members from districts
- More than one at-large member
- Smaller majority (than currently - as of 3/01) to overturn "reconsiderations" (suggest 2/3)
  - Access to more staff time, specifically to deal with Mayor's proposals
  - More and better coverage and publicity in press and on TV

#### VI. Committees and Commissions

- Good recruitment and training procedures
- Good widespread advance publicity of opportunities for service
- Committees and commissions which serve a public role that is acknowledged as a source of information and ideas for the City Council
- Convenient time and place of meetings

#### VII. Checks and Balances

- Reconsideration (veto) power should remain in the mayor's office but should need only 2/3's vote to overturn it (this may be tied to the need for an uneven number or more at-large members of the council)
- Opportunity for citizen input at the point of reconsideration, such as public hearings; active solicitation of comment

#### VIII. Effective Management

A. Criteria from *Grading the Cities: A Management Report Card*, from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University

##### 1. Financial Management Criteria

Does the city exhibit a multi-year perspective in finances, using reliable financial information, to produce a budget and exercise appropriate control over financial operations?

Is sufficient and reliable financial information available to policymakers, managers, and citizens in a timely manner?

## 2. Human Resources Management Criteria

Does the city have a mechanism for analyzing human resource needs, employing appropriately skilled employees, and a civil service structure that supports labor-management goals?

Does the city have a process for recruiting qualified people for committees and commissions, and does it provide adequate training for both these people and elected officials?

## 3. Information Technology Management Criteria

Does the city have information technology systems in place to provide information to adequately support city officials (elected and staff)? Can the government validate and support the benefits gained from the investment in information technology? Do the information technology systems in place support the government's ability to communicate with and provide services to its citizens?

## 4. Capital Management Criteria

Does the city have a formal capital plan that coordinates and prioritizes capital spending? Does the government conduct appropriate maintenance of its capital assets?

## 5. Managing for Results

Does the city, with input from the citizens and other stakeholders, engage in results-oriented planning:

- develop indicators,
- evaluate valid data to measure progress, and
- communicate the results to all stakeholders?

## B. Budget Process

- Easy to understand, timely publication of the budget available to the public
- Publicity about the presentation of the budget, opportunity for input
- Reasonable time lines allowing for input to budget process
- Continued publication of information as budget moves through the process
- Clear explanation of the emergency or discretionary fund expenditures
- Clarity about whether emergency expenditures will form part of the base of next years budget -- will they (the emergency expenditures) be ongoing?

## C. City Staff

- Council should have a part to play in firing of City Administrator (and possibly other department heads)
- Non-interference remains essential to prevent favoritism

- Staff support should be available to the Council as well as the Mayor in examining policy proposals

Legislative analyst role should be more active in reviewing local government policy and legislative initiatives.

Position History: Oakland (1970, 1993, 2001, 2011)

### **HOUSING (1992 - revised 2012)**

- 1) To obtain the positive community benefits of in-fill housing development: e.g., commercial revitalization, support of mass transit, and increased security on streets, support efforts which:
  - a) encourage housing development on unused and under-utilized land and the adaptive re-use of appropriate older buildings for housing;
  - b) encourage development of higher density residential and mixed-use developments near commercial areas and along transportation corridors;
  - c) encourage the City government and redevelopment agency(ies) to attract developers with established records of success for development of housing in the downtown and neighborhood commercial areas; and
  - d) encourage policies and public review processes which enhance the success of in-fill developments (such as: early and continuing public involvement in decision-making; maintenance of the architectural integrity of the neighborhood; adequate public recreational space; and good design and quality construction).
- 2) Since secondary units make home ownership more affordable and increase the variety of rental housing available, support activities and programs which reduce barriers to development of secondary units, while ensuring access of emergency vehicles within neighborhoods with concentrations of secondary units.
- 3) Support policies and programs which improve the variety of housing opportunities in each neighborhood, including housing which is affordable to a range of income groups and housing for persons with special needs.
- 4) Support the long-term development of non-profit community development corporations, in recognition of their important role in developing and managing low-income housing.
- 5) Encourage the City government to develop and enforce mechanisms, such as use permit conditions, which are carefully designed to ensure ongoing and adequate supervision of residential care facilities.

6) Support comprehensive services to homeless persons and households and to persons needing emergency shelter, which provide both immediate living needs and transition to stable housing and self-sufficiency.

### **WATERFRONT (1993)**

#### **Waterfront Land Use Planning**

1) Land Use Master Plan: Development of the Waterfront should be guided by the master plan including the land within Port jurisdiction, adjacent land within City jurisdiction, and land within Department of Defense jurisdiction. This master plan should seek to maximize the economic, recreational and aesthetic potential of the Waterfront, including:

- a) recreation, sporting and pedestrian access to the water and the shoreline.
- b) housing opportunities in the waterfront area.
- c) important vistas of natural areas, the waterway and constructed industrial features, such as the harbor.
- d) pedestrian and bicycle circulation along the shoreline and between the Waterfront and important inland paths.
- e) buffering of industrial areas from adjacent residential areas.
- f) maximizing the economic vitality of a variety of commercial and industrial uses which are appropriate for the Waterfront.

2) The LWVO specifically supports the following activities which can improve land use planning of the Waterfront:

- a) development of the East Bay Trail through the Waterfront and the creation of mini-parks and vista points along the shoreline trail.
- b) establishment of vista points and fishing piers within the Waterfront, including re-establishment of the Seventh Street Waterfront Park.
- c) coordination of land use decisions between the City Planning Commission and the Board of Port Commissioners, and continued public participation in planning decisions of the Port of Oakland.
- d) establishment of a continuous pedestrian path between Lake Merritt and Jack London Square and Estuary Cove.

#### **Economic Development**

1) Economic Development Strategy: The LWVO supports coordinated economic development planning and activities involving the Port of Oakland, the City of Oakland and the County of Alameda. This planning should specifically seek to maximize the indirect impacts of the transportation terminals and the commercial opportunities derived from the unique assets of Oakland's Waterfront.

2) Economic planning related to the transportation terminals specifically should encompass such aspects as:

a) business attraction - identifying the types of businesses which gain an advantage from locating near marine/land/air transportation, and systematically seeking to attract such businesses to Oakland.

b) expanded distribution and maintenance facilities for air/land/marine cargo in the airport and marine terminal areas.

c) services for airport travelers - improvement of the identification and promotion of services close to the airport, such as local transportation, rental car companies, lodging, restaurants, and meeting facilities.

d) direct economic impacts - maximize the local economic impacts of the operation of the airport and marine terminals, such as local purchasing and hiring, creation of training opportunities and entrepreneurial programs in commercial areas, such as the airport concessions.

3) Education and training opportunities: The LWVO supports activities which utilize the heritage and the economic and ecological opportunities of the Waterfront in the education of students. These opportunities include:

a) vocational education - opportunities such as vocational academies and targeted training programs can increase the likelihood that Oakland students will ultimately be hired into occupations which are available on the Waterfront.

b) unique educational opportunities - learning about activities of the harbor and the associated training activities, visits to natural marine areas and other educational opportunities which are uniquely available in Oakland, can inspire students, and provide a laboratory for learning.

c) heritage - knowledge of Oakland's Waterfront heritage, such as transcontinental railroad, shipyards, Waterfront authors and adventurers, early aviation history, containerization shipping innovations, and other Waterfront history should be incorporated in local educational programs to demonstrate the historic importance of Oakland.

### **Military Base Conversion Planning**

The Oakland Army Base ultimately can provide space for secondary industries which can provide important job opportunities and for other activities that increase the variety of activities on the Waterfront and enhance the West Oakland neighborhood. The LWVO supports early and thorough contingency planning of future uses of the two installations and public participation in the planning process, in accordance with the federal military base conversion statutes.

### **Public Involvement**

The LWVO supports ongoing public involvement in planning and land use decisions of the City of Oakland and the Port of Oakland.

## ALAMEDA COUNTY COUNCIL POSITIONS

### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (1979)

The Leagues of Women Voters of Alameda County support the need for Children's Mental Health Services and recommend the following:

- A. Increase the priority given Children's Mental Health Services in the County Mental health program and budget.
- B. Retain present service and ensure equal access to Day Treatment Service throughout the County.
- C. Focus on prevention and early intervention by:
  - 1. Increased education of parents and public
  - 2. Utilization of school resources where feasible.
- D. Finance these services by:
  - 1. Active pursuit of all available sources of funds.
  - 2. Coordination of County, State, and Federal budget deadlines
  - 3. Sufficient funds for a service from the level of government that mandates that service.
- E. Make most efficient use of funds by:
  - 1. Retention and expansion of contracts with private providers
  - 2. Support for Case Management system of services
  - 3. Increased coordination and communication among all public and private service providers and continuation of the Interagency Council.

### ALAMEDA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION, ALAMEDA COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, ALAMEDA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION (2007)

I. **Position in Brief:** Support an efficient, effective and equitable balance of responsibility and authority among the levels of governance with accountability to the public and that results in providing services that best meet needs of students and the local school districts.

A. Efficiency: Provide those services (education, training, fiscal, oversight) to county school programs and district school programs that do not duplicate those provided by districts or other agencies

B. Effectiveness: Provide those services that best meet the needs and interests of local districts. Constantly monitor services to determine their effectiveness, and remove or improve those that are not meeting district goals.

C. Equitable Balance of Responsibility and Authority for Governance



Establish policies that delineate the powers and functions of each entity where not covered explicitly in the Education Code to ensure an equitable balance of responsibility and authority for governance and to enhance accountability.

Provide for consolidation of functions between and among county offices of education to deal with area-wide problems. Consider consolidation of functions to achieve cost savings and improve the quality of service and equity.

#### D. Accountability to the Public

Ensure that both the Board and the Superintendent abide by the tenets of the Brown Act, and the Freedom of Information Act and the California Public Records Act.

Maintain public visibility by utilizing technology to keep constituents informed about actions taken by the Board and the County Superintendent.

Advertise upcoming elections for Board members' and the County Superintendent's seat to encourage contested elections. This will allow the public to learn about the candidates' credentials and the issues so they can make informed choices.

Develop a collaborative Annual Work Plan to set up measurable goals to be used in the annual evaluation of both Board Members' and Superintendent's performance. These evaluations will then be helpful in the Superintendent salary-setting process and for measuring progress toward established goals.

## II. Monitoring

The League's role should be to:

Continue observing County Board of Education meetings to ensure compliance with the Brown Act and Education Code.

Monitor the County Office website to ensure that constituents have access to current and complete information concerning actions taken by the County Office/Superintendent and the Board.

Review Grand Jury comments and recommendations pertaining to the County Board and County Superintendent and support those that support the improvement of efficient, effective, and appropriate governance and fiscal management of those entities.

Monitor the governance model to determine if there is any interest by the public in changing the method of selecting a County Superintendent.

### **JUVENILE JUSTICE (Adopted 1977)**

The Alameda County Council of the League of Women Voters supports policies that promote services to meet the needs of Alameda County and minimize delinquency.

A. The County Council supports effective and responsible decision-making for youth at the county level.

Specifically the council supports:

- Continuing evaluation of the Alameda County Probation Department Juvenile Division to ensure that its goals and functions are clear and effective;
- Continued citizen input into all countywide juvenile justice programs;
- Coordination of all community programs for Alameda County youth to ensure that the needs of the communities are met and that duplication of services is avoided;
- Citizen involvement in setting priorities for diversion and prevention services;
- Continued evaluation and accountability to the public of programs funded by public moneys.
- County decision-making bodies:
  - a. Appointments to commissions that reflect the diversified population of the county;
  - b. Guidelines for commission members that are clear statements of their responsibilities and authority;
  - c. Adequate staff;
  - d. Assessment of limited number of terms;
  - e. Reimbursement to commissioners for personal expenses, i.e., transportation and baby-sitting.

B. The County Council supports a coordinated multidimensional concept of services which could include:

- Vocational training;
- Programs that provide jobs and job training for youth;
- Recreational opportunities
- Counseling for youth and their families, both long-term and for crises;
- Mental health services which meet the needs of youth, supported by adequate funding, i.e., residential treatment centers for juveniles;
- Youth diversion programs:
  - a. Staff and volunteers having close ties to the community of the juveniles being served;
  - b. Involvement of youth in program planning, implementation and evaluation;
  - c. Integration into projects available with other than just delinquent youths;
  - d. Adequate program facilities.

C. The County Council encourages school districts to deal effectively with pupil welfare and pupil attendance, i.e., truancy, child neglect, child abuse and severe behavior problems.

D. The County Council supports greater community awareness of the problems and needs of youth and programs that are currently available