

League of Women Voters Fremont, Newark, and Union City

Local Positions

Positions are the basis for League action. Local positions are the result of the following process:

1. The Annual Meeting selects an item for study.
2. A League committee gathers information, studies the issues.
3. Presents information and questions to the membership for evaluation.
4. The committee then presents the consensus to the local Board of Directors at the next Annual Meeting for adoption.
5. The Annual Meeting reviews and confirms local positions annually, updates positions and drops outdated positions when appropriate.

As the grassroots of all League levels, local Leagues participate in Bay Area, State and National studies and position development. When appropriate, local Leagues may take action locally on specifically identified portions of Bay Area, State, and National positions as well as local positions. Periodically, the Annual Meeting incorporates a portion of an existing State or National League position into local positions. Leagues may also act on League Principles which are “concepts of government” to which the League subscribes.

Any action taken at the local level in the name of the League must be authorized by the local League Executive Committee Board of Directors.

This League became an area League covering the Tri-Cities in 1982. Prior to 1982, land use, housing, planning, parks, transportation, school, and government positions were established which applied only to Fremont. The 1991 and 1995 Annual Meetings authorized the application of some pre-1982 positions to Newark and Union City. The 1995 Annual Meeting authorized the name change of this League to the League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark, and Union City. LWVFNUC, used below, refers to the League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark, and Union City.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

I. Form of Government: The 1996 Annual Meeting approved development of criteria, if needed, for changing from a general law form of municipal government to a charter city. The position below applies only to Fremont.

The LWVFA strongly supports governing Fremont under California General Law rather than under a city charter. We support the council-manager form of government. The League sees no need to increase the number of councilpersons or to elect councilpersons by districts since it is important for our elected officials to retain their responsiveness to the needs of the entire community.

If districts should ever be formed, we strongly recommend that they be based on equal population. We believe that the ward system is undesirable for Fremont at any time. The League is not in favor of a separately elected mayor.

II. Government Policies. 1978. 1995 edited to name each of the Tri-Cities.

The LWVFNUC believes citizens of Fremont Newark and Union City should be able to identify the guiding policies of their city as a whole, of the individual city departments, and the special districts. An understanding of these policies and how they are being used can give citizens an indication of where their government is headed.

III. Fundamental Goals of City Planning: 1963, 1968-69, 1971, 1991. The Annual Meeting applied this position to Newark and Union City in 1995.

A. The LWVFNUC believes that each of the Cities should be a unified city which is physically, socially, economically and culturally balanced; and that there should be maximum opportunity for citizen choice at all economic levels in the following areas:

- 1) Diversity in activities;
- 2) Variety in physical character, including housing types;
- 3) Access to public and private transportation; and
- 4) Convenient working and shopping areas.
- 5)

B. We believe the circulation system should facilitate all modes of transportation and provide for safe, convenient pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access between and among residential areas, community facilities, and employment centers.

C. We believe the natural differences of hills, plains, and the bay should be retained as these regions develop; and that there should be an integrated system of open space and a desirable visual image which will give identity to each of the Tri-Cities within the context of the metropolitan Bay Region. *We support preservation of the wetlands. (*LWVUS. Included in local positions in 1996.)

D. We believe the historic elements of each City should be preserved and enhanced to give continuity with the past.

E. We believe each of the Tri-Cities should:

- 1) Develop and maintain an adequate employment and tax base for government services;
- 2) Provide optimum public improvements at the least cost to the taxpayers;
- 3) Assist in providing for the practical needs of industry and commerce; and
- 4) Ensure adequacy of city revenues by using fees and assessment charges when benefits accrue primarily to those paying.

IV. Residential Planning and Development Policy: 1971, Amended 1991. The Annual Meeting applied this position to Newark and Union City in 1995.

- A. The LWVFNUC supports the concept of a residential density range, which allows for increased densities in exchange for increased amenities and benefits to the neighborhood and City.
- B. We believe that the amenities and benefits necessary to increase housing densities from one density step to the next should be spelled out in each city's general plan and development policy
- C. We support planned districts and the exploration of new and imaginative methods of combating poor land use.
- D. We support retention of the beauty of the hills and the safety of houses built on them.

V. Housing Planning Policy: 1971 Amended 1991 The Annual Meeting applied this position to Newark and Union City in 1995.

The LWVFNUC supports:

- A. Adequate housing supply of all types and
- B. prices to meet community needs/objectives and the distribution of
- C. housing types, sizes and costs to insure a full range of housing opportunities for each high school attendance area, subject to land use designations and density limitations of the General Plans of Fremont, Newark and Union City.
- D. Equal housing opportunities for all persons regardless of family size and income. Development and implementation of programs to prevent and remedy housing neighborhood deterioration and to encourage private maintenance and rehabilitation activities.
- E. Exploration of all feasible means of providing assistance to families and individuals whose housing needs are not met by the private market.
- F. A level of public services, design, amenities and maintenance to insure that residential environments will maintain their viability and livability.

See the LWVBA Policy on Housing for vertical element that can be locally applied at www.lwvba-ca.org.

VI. Recreation, Open space and Parks Planning Policy: 1979. Amended 1991. In 1995, items A. & B. (1)-(4) were applied to Newark and Union City.

- A. The LWVFNUC believes any and all appropriate means should be used to retain and acquire open space land in conformance with the general plans of each of the Tri-Cities and the Master Plan of the East Bay Regional Parks District.
- B. The League supports:
 - 1) A broad, comprehensive public and private recreation system meeting the needs of all income and age groups;
 - 2) The preservation of open spaces to encourage the advantageous use of existing natural features and historical resources, open spaces, and structural facilities as a part of the recreation program;
 - 3) The preservation of recreation areas as significant elements of the landscape;

- 4) The use of existing and future Federal and State funds and programs for acquisition and development of park land; and
- 5) A master plan for Central Park (in Fremont) and up-to-date park standards.

VII. Commercial Planning Policy: 1971, 1991. Amended 1997.

- A. The League supports commercial goals and policies which achieve the following objectives:
 - 1) Enhancement of the central business district concept which includes land uses for professional and administrative functions, high density and mixed use residential, regional or city-wide retail markets, entertainment facilities and other commercial functions which further the goal of a city center;
 - 2) New commercial centers* which enhance existing city commercial activity and improve access to goods and services;
 - 3) Preservation and strengthening of existing community commercial centers by encouraging a variety of desirable and viable commercial activities;
 - 4) Neighborhood commercial centers distributed throughout the city to provide convenience shopping and service needs for residents; auxiliary commercial centers to service industry and its employees; and, commercial facilities to service the motoring public.
- B. A proposal for commercial development or rezoning to commercial uses should further the objectives in A. 1-4. Barring compelling findings to the contrary, the League opposed commercial uses or rezonings to commercial uses which conflict with other general plan goals or League environmental positions, invade residential areas, negatively affect the aesthetic value and/or quality of life of a community, create incompatible land uses, contribute unacceptably to traffic congestion, or create unsafe conditions.

*Commercial Centers Neighborhood: convenience shopping for nearby residents such as grocery and drug stores, cleaners, hardware and other retail and service businesses. Community: a larger number of stores than a neighborhood center and offering a broad range of shopping opportunities which could include supermarkets, limited department and discount stores, drug and hardware stores, personal service businesses, etc. Regional: large comprehensive shopping facilities such as malls which provide comparison-shopping opportunities. Specialty: for example, one-of-a-kind shops or boutiques, art galleries cafes and restaurants, etc. Office Commercial: finance, insurance, real estate business services, medical offices, etc.

VIII. Implementation of Planning Goals: 1963, 1969, 1971, Amended 1991.

- A. The Cities should carry out general plan goals using the range of powers granted under general law cities.
- B. Adequate funding should be provided for City planning staffs and the careful use of consultants for special studies.
- C. The LWVFNUC supports advance planning as an important tool for implementing the goals of the General Plan.

IX. Capital Improvements: 1979; outdated positions dropped 1991; 1991-92 new study adopted; consolidation of existing and new capital improvement positions adopted in 1992.

The LWVFNUC believes the following policies and procedures should guide capital improvement planning and budgeting in Fremont, Newark, and Union City:

- A. Early in the capital improvement-planning process, each of the Tri-Cities should include steps to identify the concerns and priorities of the citizens served. The following outreach methods can give citizens realistic opportunities to influence capital decisions:
 - 1) Well publicized public meetings to hear public comment, such as:
 - a) City-sponsored town meetings in different parts of the city and city-wide public meetings,
 - b) Public hearings held by commissions whose jobs include advising the Council on capital projects
 - 2) City staff meetings with the public on specific categories of capital projects
 - 3) City published handbook to explain the capital planning process and to pinpoint timely opportunities for public influence on projects and priorities.
 - 4) Public opinion surveys, and contact with neighborhood and citywide organizations
 - 5) to invite participation in the capital planning process
- B. To further responsible and responsive government, the LWVFNUC supports
 - 1) A 5-year capital improvement plan which is reviewed and updated annually
 - 2) An annual Council/Staff review of capital priorities,
 - 3) An annual opportunity for public comment on capital priorities, and
 - 4) A periodic outside audit of the effects of the criteria used to prioritize capital projects.

- C. The LWVFNUC supports use of the following criteria as guidelines for prioritizing capital projects: (the numbering of the criteria does not imply a ranking)
- 1) Capital maintenance: repair, replacement and maintenance of existing capital assets; consideration of the long-term operating and maintenance costs of new projects.
 - 2) Essential services: those services which government must manage and fund to meet the basic needs of the general population, such as services that protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the public, and a circulation system that includes all modes of transportation.
 - 3) Quality of life: social and cultural amenities which reflect the desires of the community and provide (a) a physical, social, economic and cultural balance; (b) a comprehensive recreation system that meets the needs of all income and age groups and includes cultural facilities; (c) preservation and enhancement of the historic assets of the Tri-Cities; and (d) protection and enhancement of the environmental assets of the Tri-Cities.
 - 4) Economic impact: projects which contribute to the stability and development of the local economy and lead to the creation of jobs.
 - 5) Funding: the desirability of the project if funding sources are available outside the general or capital improvement fund.
- D. The LWVFNUC supports a Fremont cultural arts facility located in the Civic Center Area and the use of appropriate financing for the facility.
- E. The capital improvement planning process should be matched with an accountability system so that the public can know the progress being made toward implementing the capital plan.
- F. Financing Guidelines: With the exception of item 2, the financing guidelines below consist of general concepts of government (Principles) in which the League believes and elements of existing local and state positions. They are collected, summarized and printed here for ease of use in the evaluation of capital improvement financing.
- 1) General Principles: The League believes in responsible, responsive, efficient and economical government that is adequately financed and that promotes a sound economy (League Principles). We support the continuing search for better ways to finance government (LWVC).
 - 2) More specifically, the LWVFNUC supports:
 - a) The assessment of the short and long-term impacts of the capital plan on the operating budget; (added locally in 1992)
 - b) The provision of public improvements at the least cost to the taxpayers;
 - c) To ensure adequacy of revenue, the use of fees and assessment charges when benefits accrue primarily to those paying; and a variety of local revenue sources; (LWVC, vertical which means position may be used on the local level without prior permission from LWVC Board)
 - d) Cost-saving management techniques; (LWVC, vertical)
 - e) Use of the property tax primarily for services directly related to property such as police, fire protection, streets, water, sewerage, and street lighting; for such other local services as libraries, parks, recreation, the general administrative cost of local government and public schools (LWVC, vertical)
 - f) Minimal use of direct citizen voting on tax sources and rates. (LWVC: non-vertical, which means that permission must be given from LWVC Board before using as a basis for local action.)
 - g) Provision for simple majority vote in the constitutional requirement for local general obligation bond measures. (LWVC, non-vertical)

X. Sign Control: 1968-69. Amended 1997. Applied to Newark and Union City 1997.

The League opposes billboards and believes sign regulations should:

- A. Allow latitude for variety of sign design while requiring that the design be harmonious with the architectural style of the building, compatible with adjacent land uses and appropriate in size;
- B. Clearly identify the business activity or community event;
- C. Require that signs do not impede the smooth flow of traffic or create safety hazards;
- D. Limit the number and size of signs permitted in residential areas, and the period of time they may stay;
- E. Clearly define permissible sizes and locations for political signs and require the timely removal of same.

- F. Sign regulations should be fairly and uniformly enforced.

XI. Local Financing Districts: 1993. Applies to Fremont, Newark, Union City

- A. Mello-Roos Districts: If a city decides to form a Mello-Roos District, special care should be taken in writing the bylaws to assure total disclosure of the terms and costs of the district to everyone who now or in the future buys, leases or rents property in the district. The bylaws specify the purposes of the district and protect the city's credit rating and the consumer. The city must make sure all provisions of the bylaws are enforceable. It should be the city's goal to protect the consumer from assuming any financial risk that should be borne by the developer. The bylaws should specify protection for consumers against the known weaknesses of Mello-Roos Districts.
- B. Lighting and Landscaping Districts: In the use of a Lighting and Landscaping District as with all special districts, it should be the city's goal that the fees are fully explained and that public participation is ensured. Such districts should not be used to circumvent a public vote, but rather should be used to provide specific services to the people who pay for them. Public officials should be held accountable to the public in the formation and administration of Lighting and Landscaping Districts.
- C. Redevelopment Districts: When Redevelopment Districts are formed, it is essential that the intent as well as the letter of the law be fulfilled. Accountability to the public must be stressed, with strict adherence to state law. Public participation in the formation and operation of the redevelopment agency should be ensured.

XII. Coordination of Public Services in the Tri-Cities: 1979. Amended 1991.

Fremont, Newark and Union City should cooperate and coordinate with each other and the region, where appropriate, in the provision of public services and pursuit of area and regional goals.

(The 1991 Annual Meeting substituted the above general statement for the specific 1979 position, but voted to include the previous position in footnote form.)

1979 Position: To assist in achieving the objective of coordination of Tri-City public services, the previous position supported an exploration of the following efforts:

- A. Human Services: Planning for human services jointly; sponsoring area-wide needs assessment and service-provider surveys jointly; sponsoring workshops for human services professionals and staff jointly.
- B. Public Works: Sharing equipment; common/coordinated bidding on the purchase of equipment and street repairs; and, sharing or contracting between cities for street and traffic light maintenance.
- C. Police: Common bidding on the purchase of equipment; sharing transportation to the site of emergencies, combining police, fire and emergency services in a cross-utilization program.
- D. Fire: Planning through a committee or joint board, to attempt to regain the potential for increased safety, service, and fire prevention that was lost through Article 13A of the State Constitution as adopted in June 1978; sharing training and fire prevention functions; considering a more equitable financial arrangement for the use of Fremont's heavy equipment and crews.
- E. Leisure Services: Printing schedules of activities, including adult education classes, at a city or multi-city level; combining classes which are offered by more than one city and rotating the location; encouraging private business and other organizations to sponsor some of the activities previously offered by the city, without sacrificing quality and affordability; and increasing the cooperation between the leisure services department and the public school system within each city.

XIII. Transportation: 1971. Amended 1991 and Applied to the Tri-Cities

The LWVFNUC supports public transportation in the Tri-Cities both to serve those who have no private transportation and to help reduce use of the automobile. Continuing education of the public as to the need for and the advantages of mass transportation is essential for its success.

- A. Transit systems should be coordinated and evaluated periodically to assure that they are providing the maximum possible service to the public.
- B. Recognizing that bicycles are a viable alternative to the automobile the League supports the development of safe bicycle routes.

Note: See the 1991 LWVC Transportation position for vertical elements that can be locally applied.

XIV Washington Hospital: Approved at June 2007 Annual Meeting

Legislative bodies exist to serve their citizens who have the right to know how the governing body operates and that tax dollars are being spent efficiently and effectively. Legislative bodies are required to conduct all aspects of the decision-making process – including discussion, debate and acquisition of information - in a transparent manner.

- A. Washington Hospital Board should advertise its regular meetings 24 hours in advance and special meetings 72 hours in advance. All agendas, minutes, and related background material should be on its web site. Special meetings should not be used for routine business.
- B. DEVCO should advertise its regular meetings 72 hours in advance. DEVCO should make regular and public reports to the board.
- C. The Washington Hospital Board should publicize and conduct study sessions open to the public annually on its proposed budget with explanations of budget categories and specific items that a layperson can understand.
- D. Washington Hospital Board should have regular public updates on the planning and progress of the seismic retrofit and surrounding projects including awarding of contracts.
- E. The Washington Hospital Board should hold long range planning sessions open to the public on all aspects of the hospital not part of "Strategic Planning".
- F. The Washington Hospital bond oversight committee should publicize its meetings, agendas, and minutes in a timely manner. This information should be available on the hospital web site.
- G. The Washington Hospital Board should announce vacancies (Board, DEVCO, bond oversight committee) and how a member of the public may apply for the vacancy.
- H. The Washington Hospital Board should have policies in place to fill board vacancies. All board policies should be on the hospital web site.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

I. Water: 1962, 1971, Amended 1991. Applies to Fremont, Newark, and Union City.

The LWVFNUC supports:

- A. The maintenance of a water supply of adequate quality and quantity to meet the needs of industrial growth and the current and future residents.
- B. The purchase of enough water to replenish the underground basin in order to halt salt water intrusion and maintain the natural reservoir.
- C. Continued purchase of water from San Francisco Hetch Hetchy.
- D. Water conservation and the investigation of all sources of usable water such as recycling, desalination and reclamation.

II. Solid Waste Management: 1983. Updated 1995.

The League supports the development of a combination of methods for the environmentally sound and economically efficient disposition of solid waste in Fremont, Newark and Union City. These methods should include the following:

- A. Reduction of waste at the source by such means as encouraging consumers to
 - 1) Buy items with less packaging, such as generic products and items in larger containers,
 - 2) Use recyclable and reusable containers and
 - 3) Shop where bulk foods are available.
- B. Equal or favorable tax treatment at the state and national levels for the secondary materials industry.

- C. Facilities that process commingled residential recyclables for the purpose of recovering materials.
- D. Maximum residential recycling of materials through curbside recycling and composting. Business and industrial recycling to as great a degree as possible.
- E. Government subsidy or economic incentives for the development of successful recycling programs.

III. Hazardous Materials: 1995 (LWV Bay Area position adopted for local use.) Outdated portions of the position were deleted in 1995.

- A. Identification of Hazardous Materials:
 - 1) A community should identify the hazardous materials being used, stored and disposed of in its locality.
 - 2) Information should include chemical/common name of hazardous materials, quantity of substance and location, acute/chronic health effects and other potential risks from exposure. Proper precautions should be taken in handling the substance
 - 3) Emergency response procedures should be in place and methods of disposal and route of transportation should be identified.
 - 4) Information should be made available to the public as well to emergency response personnel, with safeguards for trade secrets and security concerns.
- B. Regulatory Responsibilities:
 - 1) An informed agency has the responsibility to notify other agencies and the affected public of potential risks from hazardous substances.
 - 2) Mechanisms for coordination between agencies need to be developed.
- C. Funding: Multiple sources of funding should be used for hazardous materials management programs and public education.

SOCIAL POLICIES

I. Local Juvenile Justice: 1976. Amended 1991. Amended 1996. The 1996 Annual Meeting adopted the portion of this position which refers to Newark and Union City.

The LWVFNUC supports:

- A. Continued funding of the Youth and Family Council through the Fremont general fund if other funding is unavailable; continued funding of equivalent programs in Newark and Union City through the Newark and Union City general funds if other funding is unavailable.
- B. Crisis housing or temporary housing for runaways and youths in serious conflict with their families.
- C. Provision of appropriate training for all staff involved with juvenile programs. Note: Vertical elements of the LWVUS “Children at Risk” and “Violence Prevention” positions can be used locally, when appropriate.

II. Child Care: 1985. Applies to Fremont, Newark, and Union City.

The LWVFNUC recognizes the need for quality, reliable and affordable child care as an increasingly essential need for two-job families and single parents. The League supports the provision of diverse alternative forms of child care responsive to the widely diverse social and economic needs of families.

We support the following as necessary to meeting the child care needs of families:

- A. Existing state standards for family day care and day care centers should be upheld.
- B. While most funding originates at other levels than local jurisdictions, cities should recognize that child care is an important need of its citizens. Cities should give priority to these needs in the search for allocation of funds.
- C. Schools should be involved in the provision and/or support of extended day programs (before and after school care) for school age children. Such programs should meet the varying financial situations of the school district, the program provider (if not in the district) and the parents. These programs should supplement the school in satisfying the educational and developmental needs of the children and be in accordance with all school district requirements and standards.

- D. Employers have the responsibility to assist their employees with child care needs as long as the results are a benefit to both. Means of assisting can include:
 - 1) Information and referral services.
 - 2) Flexible benefit plans that include child care as one of the options.
 - 3) Salary reduction plans that reduce the employee's gross salary with the reduced amount paid to the child care provider.
 - 4) On-site child care either sponsored by the individual employer or in conjunction with other employers.
- E. The League encourages other responsible organizations to participate in child care, in order to provide a diversity of child care programs.

EDUCATION POLICIES

I. Library: 1982. The 1995 Annual Meeting made this position applicable to Newark and Union City.

The LWVFNUC believes Fremont, Newark and Union City libraries should remain with the Alameda County library system.

- A. We support a local advisory committee in each city to work with the county and the city to promote increased attention to the needs of the library. We believe the library should increase the community's awareness of the services offered.
- B. We support the March, 1978 county position on "Access to Materials." *
- C. *Access to Materials Policy: The Alameda County library system maintains a policy which respects every patron's right to choose their own library materials. The library staff is not responsible for questioning patrons about materials being checked out. Access is also facilitated through interlibrary loans.
- D. We support the county practice of book selection, whereby staff of each library branch selects books for collections reflecting the needs of the patrons.
- E. We believe the library should provide the basic service for the most people possible. We support providing services to groups with special needs consistent with the demand and needs of the local community. We support the concept of libraries sharing materials for better and more economical use.
- F. We agree with the idea of a main central full service library supported by satellite branches and/or reading centers and bookmobile stops, the location of which should be determined by population needs. Expansion should not diminish the present level of service.
- G. We encourage increased communication and cooperation among similar and different types of libraries (public, school, industrial, business, academic), in order to achieve sharing of materials and services.
- H. We support a stable source of funding for libraries and efforts to improve the level of funding.

II. School District Budget Process and Expenditure Decisions: 1979, 1980. Amended and Applied to Tri-cities in 1991.

The LWVFNUC supports:

- A. Public participation early in the school district budget process through such means as budget advisory committees and school board public hearings. (An advisory committee and the board could hold joint or separate budget hearings); and,
- B. The use of district-wide educational philosophy and long-term goals as the basis for making expenditure decisions. School boards and administrations should strive for public awareness of the district's educational philosophy and goals as they are reflected in the budget process. District-wide measurable objectives that are keyed to the goals and which express realistic expectations should be formulated, prioritized and reviewed periodically by the School Board and the public. Progress toward goals should be evaluated regularly and reported to the public.

The LWVFNUC believes that:

- C. School districts should utilize such means as newspaper coverage, notes home to parents, principals' newsletters, notification to parent clubs, PTAs and school site councils to encourage public participation in all aspects of the budget process.

- D. School district budget formats should be understandable to the public and should cover all programs, including special programs mandated by state or federal governments.

III. Parental Involvement 1997

Parental Involvement includes support and participation of parents at home and at school in efforts that directly and positively affect the social, emotional and academic achievement of students.

The LWVFNUC supports comprehensive parental involvement policies which:

- A. Help parents develop parenting skills to meet the basic obligations of family life and foster conditions at home which emphasize the importance of education and learning.
- B. Promote two-way communication about school programs and students' progress.
- C. Involve parents, with appropriate training, in instructional and support roles at the school and in other locations that help the school and students reach state goals, objectives and standards.
- D. Provide parents with strategies and techniques for assisting their children with learning activities at home that support and extend the school's instructional program.
- E. Prepare parents to actively participate in informed school decision making and develop their leadership skills in governance and advocacy.
- F. Provide parents with skills to access community and support services that strengthen school programs, family practices and student learning and development.

IV. Community College: 1966. 1995 (In 1995 Ohlone was removed from the title of the position and the position was applied to Chabot as well as Ohlone.)

The LWVFNUC supports the basic ideals of community colleges. We believe community colleges should meet the needs of their communities. See LWVC position on community colleges for vertical elements that can be used locally at www.lwvc.org.

V. Capital Improvements In the Fremont, Newark and New Haven School Districts

The LWVFNUC believes that the following policies and procedures should guide capital improvement planning and budgeting in the three school districts.

- A. Early in the capital improvement planning process, each of the three school districts should take steps to identify the concerns and priorities of the citizens of their districts. The following outreach methods can give citizens realistic opportunities to influence capital decisions:
 - 1) Well publicized meetings to hear public comment such as :
 - a) School district sponsored town meetings in different parts of the city and district-wide public meetings,
 - b) Public hearings held by commissions whose job it is to monitor the school boards about capital projects, and
 - c) District meetings with the public on specific capital projects.
 - 2) District-published explanations of the capital improvement process, including costs, which are understandable to the citizenry.
 - 3) Public opinion surveys.
 - 4) Outreach to identify timely opportunities for public input on projects and priorities and to encourage community participation.
 - 5) District websites with pertinent information, i.e., budgets, agendas, minutes, public meeting announcements, survey results.
- B. To further responsible and responsive government, the LWVFNUC supports:
 - 1) A five-year capital improvement plan reviewed and updated annually, which includes demographic information and an inventory of school-owned properties.
 - 2) An annual school board/staff review of capital priorities with public access to all the facts and opportunity for public comment,
 - 3) An annual published review of the effectiveness of the criteria used to prioritize projects,
 - 4) Regularly scheduled open meetings (or work sessions) with other governmental entities, and
 - 5) Periodic audits of capital projects with published performance-to-plan updates.

- C. The LWVFNUC supports the use of the following criteria as guidelines for prioritizing capital projects; (the numbering of the criteria does not imply a ranking.)
- 1) Capital maintenance:
 - a) Repair, replacement, and maintenance of existing capital assets so that all facilities meet state school health and safety standards,
 - b) Long term operating and maintenance costs of new projects.
 - 2) Equal and adequate facilities, equipment, and programs at all schools at each level which meet district standards.
- D. Financing Guidelines: the following guidelines are general concepts of government which the League supports
- 1) Responsible, responsive, efficient and economical government which is adequately financed, and a continuing search for ways to finance public education by fully utilizing a variety of private and public funds and grants.
 - 2) Periodic scheduled assessments of the short and long-term impacts of capital improvement plans.
 - 3) Quality public improvements at the least cost to taxpayers.
 - 4) Districts' knowledge of, and full utilization of all available funding sources.
 - 5) The collection of the highest allowable developer fees and the management of those fees to maximize their value to the district.
 - 6) The use of cost-saving, effective management techniques.
 - 7) A simple majority vote to pass state and local school bonds.
 - 8) The formation of partnerships with other public entities and businesses.
 - 9) The streamlining of the school facilities construction process.

The Alameda County Council of League of Women Voters

Alameda County Positions

I. CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (Adopted 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.

II. BOARD OF EDUCATION AND OFFICE OF EDUCATION (Adopted 1996)

The Alameda County Council of the League of Women Voters supports assignment of education services to be performed to the most appropriate level (local district or county office) with that determination based upon the following criteria:

- A. Most economically feasible, as related to size and wealth of district Availability of funding
- B. Economy of scale
- C. Best meets the needs of students
- D. Best meets the needs of local districts, their interest and demand for service
- E. Frequency of use of the service at the local district
- F. Priority of local districts
- G. Equality of distribution of services to all students in large and small districts
- H. Makes best use of expertise
- I. Enables the teacher to best utilize the services
- J. Services are not duplicated at another level

Programs should be evaluated by:

- A. Comparing performance against pre-determined goals
- B. Placing "sunset" provisions on those services that perform below expected outcomes.

Recommendation to LWVC: The County Office of Education services should be consolidated in the the ten districts outlined in the Frazier Report, but with great caution, using the criteria above.

III. JUVENILE JUSTICE POSITION (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:
- 1) Continuing evaluation of the Alameda County Probation Department Juvenile Division to ensure that its goals and functions are clear and effective;
 - 2) Continued citizen input into all countywide juvenile justice programs;
 - 3) 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;
 - 4) Citizen involvement in setting priorities for diversion and prevention services;
 - 5) Continued evaluation and accountability to the public of programs funded by public moneys.

County decision-making bodies:

- 1) Appointments to commissions that reflect the diversified population of the county;
- 2) Guidelines for commission members which are clear statements of their responsibilities and authority;
- 3) Adequate staff;
- 4) Assessment of limited number of terms;
- 5) 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:
- 1) Vocational training;
 - 2) Programs that provide jobs and job training for youth;
 - 3) Recreational opportunities
 - 4) Counseling for youth and their families, both long-term and for crises;
 - 5) Mental health services which meet the needs of youth, supported by adequate funding, i.e., residential treatment centers for juveniles;
 - 6) 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.

Vocational training:

- 1) Programs that provide jobs and job training for youth;
- 2) Recreational opportunities
- 3) Counseling for youth and their families, both long-term and for crises;
- 4) Mental health services which meet the needs of youth, supported by adequate funding, i.e., residential treatment centers for juveniles;
- 5) 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.