

Group 5 - LWVOR and LWVPDX POSITIONS 2021-2022 PROGRAM

PLANNING: Forest management, land use, urban growth and transportation

Discussion Unit Zoom Meeting: Saturday, Jan. 16 10:00 a.m.; Discussion leaders: Carol Cushman and Linda Mather

LWVOR POSITIONS

**Land Use: Support for Land Use Goal 4, Forests, and Goal 7, Natural Hazards
Land Use**

Water Quality and Quantity

LWVPDX POSITIONS

Regional Planning and Governance

Urban Growth Management

Metropolitan Transportation

Possible references to use during January discussion:

[Introduction to Oregon's Statewide Land Use Planning Goals](#)

[Summary of Oregon's Statewide Land Use Planning Goals](#)

LWVUS - position on Natural Resources:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that natural resources should be managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future availability. Pollution of these resources should be controlled in order to preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health.

The LWVOR Legislative Action Team 2021 prioritized seven issues, one of which is SUPPORT WILDFIRE RECOVERY by addressing drought, housing, water quality, risk mapping and effects on underserved Oregonians.

If there is a topic for which there is no LWVUS, LWVOR or LWVPDX position, our League cannot advocate for public policy changes on that topic. If your group believes we need a position on a topic, you may suggest a study or concurrence with a position from another state or local League . A study, restudy or concurrence must be approved by the membership before it is adopted.

You also may suggest forming a LWVPDX Interest Group for topics related to positions about which members want to learn or presenting an educational event on any public policy topic.

LWVOR Positions

Forests (*LWVOR under Land Use Goal 4, Amended 1994*), p.15

Oregon's forests are some of the most productive in the world. While commercial timber harvest has declined in the last few decades, it remains a major economic contributor to our state's economy. Forests in Oregon cover more than 30 million acres, about 48 percent of the state.

Goal 4 protects working forest land around the state, preserving it for commercial forestry while recognizing its value for fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, and protection of air and water quality.

The goal requires [each] county to identify forest land, designate it as such on the comprehensive plan map, and zone it consistently with state rules. The goal defines forest land in two ways. One way is based on productivity, as measured by the U.S. Forest Service. The other is by making a judgement about whether land is suitable for other, non-commercial forest uses, such as watershed protection, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreation.

Goal 4 places development restrictions on forest lands. These restrictions seek to prevent activities that could conflict with forestry practices. Local zoning regulations prevent forest land from being divided into parcels too small to manage effectively for timber, habitat, recreation, watershed protection, and other purposes. Some forest parcels qualify for a dwelling.

 [Read full text version of Goal 4](#)

Natural Hazards (*LWVOR support for Land Use Goal 7, Areas subject to Natural Disasters and Hazards, Amended 2001*)

Goal 7 requires local comprehensive plans to address Oregon's natural hazards. Protecting people and property from natural hazards requires knowledge, planning, coordination, and education.

We have been planning for some of Oregon's natural hazards since the program began. River and coastal floods, landslide, wildfires, and coastal erosion are a consistent presence in Oregon. In recent years, more awareness has been developing about the possibility of a major earthquake and tsunami from the Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ). Good planning does not put buildings or people in harm's way. Planning, especially for the location of essential services like schools, hospitals, fire and police stations, is done with sensitivity to the potential impact of nearby hazards.

A local government addresses natural hazards in its comprehensive land use plan. They do this by adopting a natural hazard inventory, and supporting plans and policies. A limited amount of [planning grant money](#) is available through DLCDD to help communities address these planning needs.

DLCD works with the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and others to help communities plan for natural hazards.

 [Read full text version of Goal 7](#)

Land Use (*LWVOR under Statewide Planning, Updated 2002*), p. 16

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) as the statewide planning agency. We also support the 19 statewide land use goals. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports policies that promote both conservation and development of land as a natural resource, in accordance with Oregon's land use goals. Applying this principle, the League believes:

- ***The state should have the prime responsibility for establishing statewide planning goals and for supervising and coordinating comprehensive land use plans, with participation by citizens and by local and regional governments.***
- ***The state, with citizen participation, should identify, regulate and enforce areas of critical statewide concern.***
- ***Consideration of accurate information concerning water availability and quality should be a prime factor when making land use decisions.***
- ***Taxation and assessment policies should support comprehensive land use plans.***

The League supports the establishment of a regional government in an area where planning and delivery of services can be more efficiently and economically provided by such a government.

Water Policy – Quality and Quantity, Adopted April 2011; Replaced positions on Water Policy and Planning (adopted January 1977; revised March 1985) and Water Quality (adopted January 1969) **This position is used to address drought.**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that water is a resource that should be managed for the benefit of the public and as sustainable habitat for all life forms. The League supports Oregon state policies and statutes that promote comprehensive long-range planning for conservation and management of ground and surface water and the improvement of water quality. Regulating agencies that govern the protection and conservation of water should be transparent and provide the public easy access to information.

The League supports management approaches that maximize interagency communication to include but are not limited to:

1. Uniform definitions of “beneficial uses” and other terminology for both quality and quantity management,

2. Coordination of activities including water allocation, measurement, monitoring/testing, enforcement of water law and the promotion of water conservation,
3. Well-defined statutory enforcement procedures and the funding to protect water resources held in common, and
4. Recognition of the variability of local/basin/watershed quality and quantity needs.

The League recognizes the application of historic prior appropriations of water but supports modifications in order to accomplish the following:

1. Consider both in-stream and out-of-stream beneficial uses of water,
2. Facilitate changes from one beneficial use of water to another,
3. Provide incentives for water user conservation,
4. Incorporate evolving scientific understanding of natural water systems in waste management,
5. **Develop priority uses for water in times of shortage,** and
6. Expand protection of in-stream beneficial uses such as minimum perennial stream flow.

The League believes that the interdependence of land use planning and water planning must be recognized and required at all levels of government:

1. Local comprehensive plans, watershed plans, basin plans, state and regional plans should be coordinated and complementary.
2. Roles and responsibilities of all decision makers and agencies affecting water resource and quality issues should be clearly defined.

The League believes that all planning for ground and surface water should include consideration for both the quality of the water and the availability of water to meet the beneficial uses. Planning at all levels should consider existing water rights and current and projected uses. The League acknowledges that this may be best accomplished at the watershed/basin level if adequate funding and professional staffing are available. Basin/ watershed water management should be efficient and economical, responsive to public need, flexible to allow for changes over time, and lead to conservation and allocation of the resource in the public interest. Transfers of water between basins should require coordination with planning and water use in both basins.

The League recognizes that effective planning for water protection and use is most effective with a complete inventory of the water resource including all domestic wells and encourages moving toward this goal. Priority efforts should be directed to geographic areas with identified problems and vulnerabilities.

The League opposes degradation of all of Oregon's surface and ground water. The League supports policies and legislation that integrate water quality into resource management and include but are not limited to standards for:

1. Potable water and drinking water treatment facilities,

2. Placement and inspection of septic tanks and alternative individual treatment systems,
3. In-stream surface water quality for recreational use, including primary contact sports, commercial and sport fishing, and habitat protection,
4. Ground water quality for recognized beneficial uses,
5. Agricultural, municipal, forestry and industrial wastewater discharge and runoff,
6. Uniform water quality testing protocols– updated as scientific methodologies improve,
7. Permitting and enforcement procedures with agency funding adequate to ensure timely compliance,
8. Adequate, well maintained sewers and sewage treatment facilities and
9. Control and treatment of runoff from non-pervious surfaces.

The League recognizes that conservation strategies for surface and ground water, including but not limited to incentives, regulations and rationing in emergency situations, are needed to meet future demand. Individuals, agriculture, municipalities, forestry and industry should be encouraged to develop practices to reduce water usage and minimize pollution. Support should be provided for upgrading and maintaining the equipment necessary for water conservation. The League supports the need to build resiliency and innovation into water planning in order to address climate change impacts.

Public involvement should be encouraged throughout the water management and planning processes. The processes should be transparent and include educational components.

The League acknowledges that all water users must share in the cost of water management. Rate payers should have primary responsibility for infrastructure maintenance, delivery and conservation. The state should have primary responsibility for planning, research, data collection and public outreach. Permit fees should be a significant contributor to the development of infrastructure.

LWVPDX positions

Regional Planning and Governance, (LWVPDX 1996), p.12

The Leagues of Women Voters of Portland and Clackamas County believe the following issues are of regional concern:

- **Growth management** - affordable housing, long-term planning, parks/open space, urban growth boundaries/densities, economic development
- **Natural systems management** - water, air quality, solid waste/recycling
- **Regional infrastructure** - transportation including ports and airports, sewers, storm water drainage

- **Human services and amenities** - arts, libraries, education, health service, mental health
- **Public safety** corrections, police, emergency preparedness

We believe that efficiency, political feasibility, and economy should be determining factors in cooperative efforts among local governments. Intergovernmental agreements are one method of resolving issues that local governments cannot solve by themselves.

We believe that the entire area benefits from having regional attractors for arts, sports, and recreation. User fees and hotel-motel taxes should be part of the funding for these facilities.

Urban Growth Management, (LWVPDX 2000) p.12

The Leagues of Women Voters of Portland and Clackamas County support the concept of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), including designation of urban reserve lands for future needs. The UGB should be difficult to change to ensure well-managed growth. Metro should work closely with local jurisdictions to ensure that funding is identified for planning, infrastructure, and services to urban reserves.

Requests for amendments to the UGB should be allowed from Metro, counties and cities with jurisdiction, and landowners. Notice of proposed amendments should be provided to the petitioners, affected property owners, cities and counties, neighborhood associations, and the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC). In addition, notice must be published in local newspapers.

Public hearings shall be held at all stages of the amendment process, including the city/county level before that governing body makes its recommendation, the Metro hearings officer, the Metro Council before its final decision, and the Metro Council when it hears an appeal. Notice of public hearings should be sent at least 30 days before the scheduled hearing.

The Leagues of Women Voters of Portland and Clackamas County support the concept of Regional Urban Growth Goals and Objectives. We support the development and maintenance of functional wildlife and recreation corridors to create metropolitan greenspace. We also support retention and development of well-planned economic communities, which can include the following components: a mix of housing options, employment, social services, industry, and amenities.

Existing urban land should undergo continuous redevelopment and infill where appropriate.

Metropolitan Transportation (LWVPDX 1998), pp.12, 13

Transportation of People. The Leagues of Women Voters of Portland and Clackamas County support a metropolitan mass transportation system which is regional, serving all surrounding communities. The system should be integrated into a well-planned

metropolitan community and should be a help in preserving the vital city core. It should be a means of equal access for drivers, non-drivers, students, elderly, and handicapped to metropolitan areas, especially to those areas of high employment. The system should be designed with consideration for economy of land use and should not significantly add to sight, sound, or air pollution, nor destroy the livability of the area involved. It should be competitive in convenience, duration and quality of ride with private cars to reduce traffic congestion. The system should be efficient and economical, with attention to cost control and financing; it should be flexibly financed.

We believe financing for a metropolitan mass transportation system should be from a combination of national, state and regional sources. We support diversion of designated gasoline tax funds and use of motor vehicle license fees for mass transit, recognizing that this may mean an increase in these taxes. We support vehicle taxes based on energy efficiency. Keeping in mind special considerations for special categories of service, we believe that mass transit riders should contribute toward the cost of their ride through fare differentials for different levels and types of service. We support a no-fare system within the city core.

In order to shift emphasis from automobile use to mass transportation, we endorse peripheral parking instead of additional core parking. To increase efficiency, small mass transit vehicles whenever feasible should be used for neighborhood districts and outlying communities; better use should be made of buses off-peak hours, and mass transit routes should enable movement directly from one outlying area to another.

Bicycle racks should be located at park and ride stations. We favor continual public education with respect to the mass transit system, conservation and efficient use of energy by public and private transportation, and traffic safety.

Transportation of Goods. The Leagues of Women Voters of Portland and Clackamas County support the transportation of goods by a variety of modes, realizing the unique capabilities of each mode. Whenever possible, and taking into consideration the commodity and situation, we encourage the use of the most economic and energy-efficient mode, and also the use of multi-modal transportation systems. We believe that communities should have access to some mode of transportation for goods.

Transportation Routes. Transportation routes must be an integral part of all land use planning. Planning for the location and construction of transportation routes must weigh all social and environmental costs, including economy of land use, fuel shortages, and sight, sound and air pollution. Individual citizens and neighborhood groups must be kept informed and insured input and active participation in the planning, development and operation of any transportation program, especially for their own area. To minimize overlapping of functions, governmental agencies should coordinate transportation planning.

TriMet. The TriMet Board of Directors should be appointed by the governor with consideration of regional recommendations and broad district representation. The directors should be compensated for board-approved, out-of-district expenses.

TriMet should continue to be a separate entity and should work with the regional government for planning and resource utilization.

We support a payroll tax within the TriMet service district boundaries, that is broadly based and is equitably shared between employer and employee.