

2022-2023 PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

By Judy Froemke, Units Chair & Program Planning Co-Chair

During January 2022, 53 League members participated in seven Discussion Groups to help plan the League's Program for the 2022-23 League year. There were total of 137 attendees at the Discussion Group meetings. Most members attended two or more discussions.

One theme dominated the discussions: Diversity/Equity/Inclusion. The topics for discussion included healthcare inequities, mental health services and emergency services, reproductive rights, immigration, tribal rights, voting rights, governance issues, election methods, educational equity in funding and curriculum, neighborhood associations, urban growth management, green construction codes, transportation safety, clean energy, water resources/management, gun safety, emergency planning, violence protection for women and children, and organizational equity.

Each Discussion Group made **recommendations** to retain, drop, update, or restudy LWV advocacy positions, as well as **recommendations** for Civic Education programs, Action Committee programs and advocacy, and Interest Groups.

BOARD RECOMMENDED PROGRAM

1. Retain all current LWVPDX positions.
2. There will be no board-recommended study for the 2022-2023 year.
3. Update the wording of the LWVPDX position on Neighborhood Associations by replacing the words, "the Office of Neighborhood Involvement," with "the Office of Community and Civic Life," because this is the title given this office by the city in 2018.

NON-RECOMMENDED PROGRAM ITEMS

Members attending the Annual Membership Meeting on May 18, 2022 will have an opportunity to ask for consideration of Non-Recommended Items. If, by majority vote, the membership agrees to consider a non-recommended item, another vote will be taken on whether or not to adopt that item. When voting to adopt an update, study or restudy, members should have confidence that there will be volunteers to carry out the necessary work.

During the January 2022 Program Planning Group Discussions, the following LWVPDX positions were recommended for restudy or updates:

- **Housing Study Update:** Several of the discussion groups found that our LWVPDX positions on housing lacked sufficient recognition of the myriad issues about housing for effective advocacy. It was recommended that we undertake a study potentially leading to a new housing position. This was referred to the Housing Interest Group. After discussion, the Housing Interest Group decided to **not** recommend a Housing Study.
- **Teenage Girls at Risk:** From the Group Discussions 1 and 6, the title and scope ignore significant teen populations at risk: for example, trans teens and other gender identities. The group favored changing the title of this position to Teens at Risk. (This would require a restudy.)
- **School Funding:** From the Group Discussion 3, a general concern was expressed about the inequities of public-school funding.
- **Neighborhood Associations:** From the Group Discussion 3, a general concern with how the city is managing Neighborhood Association groups and whether the League’s position is satisfactory or needs updating.
- **Metropolitan Transportation:** From Group Discussion 4, suggestions to update this position with alternative forms of transportation (electric forms of bicycle), pedestrian safety, electric vehicle charging stations.
- **Planning:** From Group Discussion 7, (a) add equitable and inclusive to the first line, “The League of Women Voters of Portland supports comprehensive, equitable and inclusive long-range planning...”, and (b) change “citizens” to “public” or “residents.” In general, update the language to assure that it is consistent with the national policy on DEI.
- **Economic Development:** From Group Discussion 7, add language to paragraph 5 requiring involvement and input from residents when determining if an area should be designated as an urban renewal district.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PROGRAM PLANNING DISCUSSIONS

Suggestions for civic education programs, interest groups, or action may be approved by the board if they conform with League principles and there is sufficient member interest in the topics. The following recommendations do not need approval at the annual membership meeting.

The following topics were recommended for future **Civic Education** programs:

- Comparative funding of healthcare and health outcomes globally
- The importance of Public Health services - what is current and what is needed globally, nationally and at the state and local levels
- Tribal rights at the federal, state, and local levels (possibly for a Spring 2023 program)

- The metropolitan transportation system - ways to encourage people to use it and keep pedestrians safe
- Meeting basic human needs - housing and income and why for many people they do not match; how does our growth- and consumer-culture affect equity
- How to operationalize Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - individually and as an organization - in principal and in practice
- Emergency planning and the Critical Energy Infrastructure hub in the Willamette River

The following topics were recommended for future **Action Committee** attention:

- Metropolitan transportation /alternative transportation methods/safety and equity issues
- Awareness of local Public Health functions & limitations
- Mental and addictive health issues in general and specific to homeless people in the Portland area
- Emergency planning - what coordination is there among governmental bodies, grass-roots community groups, Neighborhood Associations, and the Portland League of Women Voters.

Participants expressed an interest in forming **Interest Groups** on these topics:

- Healthcare services, including mental health and addiction illness, delivery of services, financing (universal health care). This might provide a basis for further study and consideration of a new Portland League advocacy position.
- Neighborhood Associations: the city's management of these groups, whether the League's advocacy positions are satisfactory or need updating, and how to enlarge and involve all segments of neighborhoods in their Neighborhood Associations
- How does the US money system impact equity of opportunity: the history of financial and tax legislation, the Federal Reserve Board, tax incentives, growth vs. low-growth economics, the impact on housing, education, the environment. It was suggested that information gained by this proposed interest group be presented to the LWVOR Board for their re-consideration of the LWVOR position on Fiscal Policy-Tax System.
- Reactivating the Portland League's Education Interest Group to look at equity issues relating to funding at the district level and at individual schools, and whether there is transparency, equity, and accountability.
- Metropolitan transportation including alternative means of transportation (bicycle, scooter, electric versions of these), pedestrian safety, bike lanes, charging stations for electric vehicles.