

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER LAFAYETTE

Approved Program Planning 2011-2012

Annual Meeting May 19, 2011

Local Government Structure in Tippecanoe County

Revised May 2011

We believe governments should strive to increase transparency, accessibility, and accountability in all functions and in all actions. We urge township trustees to explore cooperation and consolidation of services to increase efficiency and improve service. We support increased cooperation among all local governmental bodies (townships, towns, cities and county) and encourage consideration of merging departments with similar functions, as the law permits. We support streamlining local government.

Comprehensive Planning

Revised October 2008

The League supports a **continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative** planning process. We support the Area Plan Commission (APC), the agency established by the six governmental entities in Tippecanoe County (two cities, the county, three town boards), in carrying out this process. We emphasize the need for a qualified professional staff to serve the APC in advising local elected officials.

- **Continuing** - refers to the periodic need to re-evaluate and update a plan to reflect current best use practices, changing technology, and citizen input.

- **Comprehensive** - is defined as including, but not limited to, many basic elements, for example:

 - Economic factors;

 - Sustainable land use and energy practices;

 - Population and demographics;

 - Transportation facilities and patterns, including rail and mass transit;

 - Financial resources;

 - Social and community values such as parks and recreational facilities, preservation of open space, river corridor enhancement and sustainable development, preservation of historical sites and buildings, aesthetics, and especially protecting the environment (e.g. water and air quality, wetland preservation, farmland preservation, minimizing sprawl);

 - Implementation measures such as zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, and building codes.

- **Cooperative** - includes cooperation among all levels of government, agencies within governments, educational organizations, and citizens.

Many goals expressed in national, state, and local League positions are an essential part of the planning process and are intertwined with comprehensive planning and land use. The common good of the overall community should have as much influence as the rights of the individual property owner.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Revised October 2008

Support planning for, development of, and funding for additional parks, recreation, and open space for Tippecanoe County.

- A. **Planning Goals:** The League believes that the planning goals for parks, recreation and open space in Tippecanoe County should include the following considerations:
1. Acquisition and creative development of open space in the cities and the county for active recreational purposes as well as opportunities to observe and experience nature;
 2. Preservation of the natural and historic heritage of our county, e.g. additional financial support for our historical parks, acquisition and preservation of Hadley Lake and other wetlands, and use of the Wildcat Creek area for recreational and conservation purposes in accordance with an overall orderly plan;
 3. Support for public input and involvement in the initial stages of planning as well as formation of on-going citizen advisory groups;
 4. Promotion of the philosophy that parks, recreation, and open space are a valid expenditure of local tax monies because of their contribution to sustainable economic development, a healthy community, and overall quality of life;
 5. Utilization of a combination of funding sources including local, state, and federal governmental funds in combination with foundations and other private sources; Government funding should use the least regressive taxes. Possible tax sources could include tax increment financing, local income tax, user fees for specific facilities, food and beverage tax and innkeepers' tax.
 6. Cooperation among concerned park boards and other governmental entities to make our community a place of choice.
- B. **Wabash River Corridor:** The League recognizes that the Wabash River basin is a unique, predominant and treasured natural feature not only of our community but of our state, and the League strongly supports:
1. The Wabash River Enhancement Corporation and the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission in their efforts to promote environmentally responsible urban development and natural river corridor enhancement;
 2. Improvement of water quality in the river itself and in the overall river environment;
 3. Utilizing the water in its naturally free-flowing state and preserving and stabilizing its banks;
 4. Integrated development of recreational opportunities along the Wabash River corridor including access areas and facilities for such things as canoeing, rowing, fishing, shallow-draft powerboats, as well as opportunities for hiking, camping, bicycling, and picnicking within a natural park environment;
 5. Continued development of Prophetstown State Park as an anchor for Wabash River corridor development to address unmet recreational needs in Tippecanoe County and the contiguous region;
 6. Sustainable focal point development to link the communities of Lafayette and West Lafayette. Possibilities could include restaurants, museums, community gathering places, boardwalks and overlooks.

Solid Waste Management

Direction at 2011 Annual Meeting: Review National and State positions and rewrite local position (not restudy) to update including the addition of Hazardous Waste Materials.

- A. LWVGL supports solid waste management that emphasizes waste reduction, putting source reduction (or waste minimization) foremost, followed by yard-waste composting and recycling as a means of reducing reliance on disposal.
- B. League members support government-sponsored, economically feasible, enforceable recycling systems. "Economically feasible" does not necessarily mean self-supporting.
- C. League members support government-regulated means for collection and disposal of privately generated wastes.
- D. League members support public and private sectors working together to actively promote waste reduction in Tippecanoe County and in the solid waste district.
- E. League members support financial incentives for waste reduction for both public and private trash services.
- F. LWVGL believes that effective solid waste decisions depend on public understanding and support. Solid waste decisions are not primarily engineering decisions but public policy decisions.
 - 1. The LWVGL supports responsive government decision-making on solid waste issues which develops procedures for active public involvement and which ensures the public has adequate information to participate effectively.
 - 2. The LWVGL supports the full accounting and public reporting of all costs of solid waste management by local government.
- F. LWVGL believes that the selection of a future landfill site should be part of an overall land use plan.

In order to achieve our goals:

- 1. We will use all available educational opportunities.
- 2. We will work for better enforcement of present laws.
- 3. We are open to work at whatever level (local, regional) a problem can best be solved. We should work toward a regional approach if such an approach becomes feasible.

Juvenile Services in Tippecanoe County

The LWVGL supports the establishment of long-term treatment facilities for juveniles in need of such services, and supports all efforts of the county toward their provision. We urge government funding for all detention and treatment facilities to insure that these facilities are provided to the community on a continuing basis.

Problems of Women and Women with Children Who Are Victims of Domestic Violence

Direction at 2011 annual meeting: Update position with particular attention to second phase housing.

- A. LWVGL encourages the implementation of programs to prevent family violence and supports measures which protect victims and survivors of domestic violence through uniform quality law enforcement, human services intervention, and safe housing. We support a holistic approach to the problems created by domestic violence. We advocate violence prevention education and conflict-management training as violence prevention measures.
- B. League members support uniform enforcement of laws that require law enforcement agencies to offer protection and assistance to victims of domestic violence. We support requests for funding for human services to meet the special needs of victims of domestic violence.
- C. Second-Phase Housing (a facility with on-site staff to provide housing immediately after emergency shelter).
 - 1. We support the development in Tippecanoe County of second-phase housing for victims of domestic violence. This position is based on lack of shelter for low income victims of domestic violence for whom there is no room at appropriate emergency shelters or those who have exhausted the time limit at an emergency shelter. The facility should have security-protected living arrangements, semi-independent living, and include available emotional support, child-care and assistance in arranging personal affairs.
 - 2. We advocate allocation of public revenues to local government to provide second-phase housing for victims of domestic violence.
- D. League members support requests and proposals of agencies and organizations that seek federal, state, local, and private funds for housing for victims of domestic violence.