

## LWVO Local Positions

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

The following recommendations were approved by the members in June 2022.

The LWVO Board of Directors recommends the following:

1. Update and amend the Local Government position as presented (see below).
2. Do an update study on the Local Government position with particular attention to Section V, Active Legislature, and Section VII, Checks and Balances.
3. Update and amend the Waterfront position as presented (see below)
4. Review the positions on Education and Housing in the upcoming months for possible updating and amendment at the 2023 annual meeting.

### Local Government Position

#### Position In Brief:

In order to promote good government in Oakland that:

- 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 community input
  - adequate community access
  - active legislature
  - well-formed commissions and committee,
  - adequate checks and balances between the elements of the government
  - effective management, including good budget processes 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 resident input that are convenient in time and location
- Good grievance mechanisms to ensure timely resident input.
- Well publicized ways for public to give input

##### III. Meaningful Community Input

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

##### IV. Adequate Resident Access

- Various well-publicized avenues for access
- Active promotion of involvement
- Readily available and accessible staff and committee reports
- Clear, well-defined, and searchable 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 councilmembers preferred
- Majority of members from districts
- Two-thirds vote to overturn "reconsiderations"
- Access to more staff time to provide timely and thorough analyses of 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**

- Mayor should have power to veto Council actions, with a two-thirds vote necessary to override veto
- Opportunity for resident 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
  - a. 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?
  - b. Is sufficient and reliable financial information available to policymakers, managers, and citizens in a timely manner?
2. Human Resources Management Criteria
  - a. 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?
  - b. 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
  - a. Does the city have information technology systems in place to provide information to adequately support city officials (elected and staff)?
  - b. Can the government validate and support the benefits gained from the investment in information technology?
  - c. 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
  - a. Does the city have a formal capital plan that coordinates and prioritizes capital spending?
  - b. Does the government conduct appropriate maintenance of its capital assets?
5. Managing for Results
  - a. Does the city, with input from the community 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

1. Easy to understand, timely publication of proposed, final, and mid-cycle budgets available to the public
2. Publicity about the presentation of the budget, opportunity for input
3. Reasonable timelines allowing for input to budget process
4. Continued publication of information as budget moves through the process
5. Clear explanation of the emergency or discretionary fund expenditures
6. Clarity about whether emergency expenditures will form part of the base of next year's budget -- will they be ongoing?

#### C. City Staff

1. Council should have a part to play in dismissal of City Administrator.
2. Enforcement of non-interference is critical to effective governance.
3. There should be an independent office (legislative analyst) to provide reviews of government policies and proposals.

#### *Position History:*

*Oakland (1970, 1993, 2001, 2011, 2022)*

## **WATERFRONT (1993, 2022)**

### **Waterfront Land Use Planning**

- 1) **Land Use Master Plan:** Development of the Waterfront should be guided by the Land Use Master Plan that includes all land within the City, including the Port of Oakland. 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, including low-income and affordable housing.
  - 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 the Seventh Street Waterfront Park.
  - c) coordination of land use decisions by the City Planning Commission and continued public participation in planning decisions.
  - d) establishment of a 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 to 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 associated training activities, visits to natural marine areas and shoreline parks, and other educational opportunities which are uniquely available in Oakland and can inspire students and provide laboratories 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.

### **Public Involvement**

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