

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DESCHUTES COUNTY - LOCAL PROGRAM

[Date adopted below title]

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

1992, update 2016, update 2021

To ensure that Deschutes County maintains an adequate supply of low and moderate-income housing, especially during times of rapid growth, the League of Women Voters of Deschutes County supports the following:

1. Utilize funding for such housing from various sources, including Federal, State, and Local funds; grants from philanthropic organizations, private nonprofits, builders, and other sources. Educate the public about available funding sources for affordable housing.
2. Continue the City of Bend's Affordable Housing fee (CET – Construction Excise Tax).
3. Encourage local government policies that will create higher density in residential areas and apply an *urban village concept* of development with housing near transportation, employment, shopping (grocery, pharmacy), and educational and recreational opportunities.
4. Create residential areas that contain housing for all income levels.
5. Encourage local governmental entities to provide incentives within their boundaries to build affordable housing.
6. Encourage local government to advocate at the State level for a streamlined Urban Growth Boundary process, allowing communities to respond to local housing needs in a timely manner.
7. Expand existing land use by revising development codes allowing more flexible and or fewer requirements: i.e., lot size, property setbacks, parking requirements, height restrictions.
8. Preserve existing housing supply by securing housing units for residents, limiting the use for tourists and other nonresidents.
9. Support deed-restricted housing development.
10. Repurpose existing commercial buildings such as motels, churches, malls, big box stores to residential.
11. Support state and local legislation that will create and preserve existing affordable housing units for the workforce earning below Area Median Income.

CORRECTIONS FACILITIES

1977, update 2012

The League of Women Voters of Deschutes County believes that the most important goal of a corrections system should be the successful reintegration of offenders back into the community as self-supporting, law-abiding citizens.

1. Offenders should be prepared for this by means of counseling, closely supervised parole or probation, and/or other rehabilitative programs.
2. Consistency and equity of policy and treatment are essential.
3. Since incarceration should be regarded as punishment in itself, additional punishment should not be necessary.
4. Policies adopted by those responsible for the Deschutes County Correctional Facilities should reflect an attitude which regards inmates as people who will soon return to society; policies should aim to lessen hostility and alienation rather than to increase them.
5. While reasonable surveillance is necessary for protection of staff and prisoners as well as the community, it should not be excessive. Inmates should be treated with concern for human and civil rights and personal dignity, including respect for privacy.

COUNTY CHARTER GOVERNMENT

October 16, 1997

The League of Women Voters of Deschutes County (LWVDC) supports the concept of a charter government as the best possible form of government for Deschutes County. A charter would allow the county government the adaptability needed to carry out the business of the county in a more representative, efficient, economical, responsible and unified manner. Having a home rule charter form of government would allow residents of Deschutes County to decide on issues of local concern through the enactment of local laws; and, therefore, provide more practical answers to the unique circumstances in Deschutes County.

The LWVDC will evaluate any proposed charter against its ability to meet the following criteria: (1) fair representation with responsiveness to the voters and the unique needs of Deschutes County; (2) accountability to the citizens of Deschutes County; (3) adaptability; (4) efficiency; (5) economy; and (6) responsibility.

The following are among the issues to be considered when reviewing a charter proposal:

- a. A Board of Commissioners serving as the policy making and legislative body but not as the administrative branch of the county government would provide a clear line of authority and responsibility. A strong, professional administrator should be hired by the Board to handle the administrative side of the government.
- b. A Board of Commissioners elected as part-time, and nonpartisan would take the politics out of the government and would allow those elected to represent the citizens of Deschutes County and not just those who got them elected.
- c. A Board of Commissioners elected by geographical region would give a direct voice to citizens from all areas of the county; and expanding the number of Commissioners to five or more would further

improve representation.

- d. Currently elected County Department Heads, whose positions are mostly technical in nature, should not be elected but hired by the County Administrator based upon their professional credentials (training, experience and skills). This would create a clear line of authority and responsibility in County government by reducing the number of elected department heads who are not directly accountable to the Administrator or the Board.
- e. County Departments should be organized according to function and restructured in a direct line of authority to the County Administrator which would result in better cost control, responsibility, accountability, and the ability to adapt to the changing needs of the County.
- f. The County's finances should be coordinated for accountability and efficiency of resources and personnel and not be split between elected and appointed department heads.

LOCAL EDUCATION

2013

The League of Women Voters of Deschutes County recognizes the difficulty of focusing exclusively on the local level of education, as so many aspects are determined at the state and national levels. With that in mind:

I. We support a system of quality education which realizes a student's full potential. Such a system should include, but not be limited to:

- 1. Curriculum--Flexibility in curriculum to allow each student to realize his/her potential and provide the optimum education for all students.
- 2. The optimum utilization of school facilities which meet state standards.
- 3. Flexibility of grade level assignments for the pupil. The child should be able to progress at his or her own rate.
- 4. Availability for job opportunities and work programs co-ordinated between the community and the school district. Comments: with all students out of school at the same time, more people are applying for the same job.
- 5. Increased options for meeting state attendance requirements. Comments: Flexibility with respect to school vacations gives less catch-up time for students after long vacations; better recall, very adaptable for this community's year-round tourist trade.

II: We support counseling and guidance programs at all levels of education and especially the need for such at the elementary level. We feel it is vitally important to maintain good counseling services for the social health of our community.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS TRANSPORTATION

1981 original was updated 2010

- 1. The public should be involved in any plan for public protection and also in the planning for the community's response to emergencies and disasters.
- 2. An evacuation plan should be simple and available to the public; essential details of the plan should be conveyed through local media in the event that it is needed.
- 3. All personnel who might respond to an accident should be trained in the minimum standards of handling hazardous materials and familiar with the emergency response plan. Table top and

- field exercises will aid in accomplishing this objective.
4. Emergency personnel must be familiar with the nation-wide system (DOT) of placarding and labeling hazardous materials.
 5. We support the use of the Incident Command System (ICS) by local emergency and first response agencies; in addition we support use of the Oregon Emergency Response System for assistance in resource allocation in the event of major emergencies.
 6. Strict liability for damage is important to insure accountability and prevent accidents. Deschutes County should be reimbursed for damage to property and expense of cleanup.
 7. The Oregon Department of Transportation should assure that adequate inspection is taking place of hazardous materials being transported in Oregon; inspection should include both vehicle and cargo safety.
 8. We support programs that train truck drivers of hazardous materials in how to manage their equipment and cargo in case of accidents or spills.
 9. There should be no exemption from safety standards for agricultural and government vehicles.
 10. We support the use of strict safety standards for the transportation of radiological materials.
 11. We support budgeting for improved emergency response to protect public welfare.
 12. We support the establishment of a Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPC) for Deschutes County.

LAND USE

APRIL, 1995; Update 2012

The League of Women Voters of Deschutes County supports existing statewide land use planning goals and local general plans which preserve natural resources and the rural and scenic nature of our communities. In addition, LWVDC supports local land use decisions which are in the public interest. The LWVDC supports monitoring the implementation of land use laws to prevent greater emphasis being placed on private property rights at the expense of preserving land use regulations for the public good.

RECOMMENDED POLICIES

1. Coordination between city/county governments regarding land use and zoning policies to allow for a smooth transition of lands in the Urban Growth Boundary which are governed by the County but will eventually be annexed into the City.
2. Clearly defined annexation policies to help in the transition from County to City governance.
3. Continued extensive use of citizen committees for land use issues and reviews.
4. Zoning strictly enforced and variances given only when the community would benefit.
5. Incentives to reinforce central development and urban density to protect the rural nature of areas outside the Urban Growth Boundary.
6. Encouragement of development tied to the best use of existing resources (i.e., roads, sewer, water) or development which would benefit the existing community.
7. Simplification of the land use process so the public can easily be informed and become involved in the process.
8. Enactment of policies which preserve open spaces and prime forest and farm land, water resources, wetlands and wildlife habitat.

TRANSPORTATION

Modified 2001

Update 2012

The League of Women Voters believes that it is important that we explore all transportation possibilities. Although we recognize that currently the automobile is the major means of transportation here, we advocate measures that minimize its use and effect on the environment. Among issues we support are:

1. Developing more neighborhood shopping areas which should offer a broad range of services.
2. Bicycle and walking trails, use of carpools, expansion of Dial-a-Ride, interurban buses and city bus system
3. A local gasoline tax to help finance solutions to traffic problems.
4. Planning for sidewalks, bike paths and bus lanes
5. Locating park-and-ride lots near heavily populated residential areas.
6. Locating industrial sites, retail outlets, schools and residential to minimize travel and to encourage the use of multiple passenger vehicles.
7. Encouraging employers to offer transportation and or incentives for carpooling by employees.
8. Developing a roadway network plan within the Bend Urban Area. An eastside beltline road using existing roads to the greatest possible extent should be inaugurated.
9. Building an east-west arterial with adequate bridges across the Deschutes River south and north of the Bend City Center.

The LWVDC also believes that the regional airport at Redmond should continue to be the only commercial airport in Deschutes County. The Bend Airport should be allowed to expand as private aircraft needs merit, with appropriate zoning of the surrounding land. We discourage the proliferation of private airstrips, particularly in high density population areas where safety is a problem.