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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – February 2005

The Smart Growth Vision (SGV) policies, adopted by the five major Bay Area regional agencies and Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Communities (to which the League belongs), describe how our region should grow in the future to be sustainable and to protect our air, water and open space resources. These policies seek to improve the jobs/housing linkages through the development of housing in proximity to jobs, near to public transportation, to enhance community livability by promoting in-fill, transit oriented, and walkable communities, in compact development, and to develop more multi-family housing and mixed-use development.

Regional policy makers agree that these policies can only be implemented if cities and counties plan, zone, and approve projects that fulfill this vision. This is why LWVBA has asked local Leagues to help in finding out what is actually happening in your local community. I hope that all Leagues will participate, so that we can get a true picture of our region. Your local League president has been sent a list of questions to be asked of your local Planning Director about zoning and development at specified transit station locations. The LWVBA Board is poised and ready to assist with the fact-finding. If you need clarification or have questions, contact Martha Goralka at landuse@lwbba-ca.org, Iris Winogron at programvp@lwbba-ca.org or me.

Linda Craig, President
LWV of the Bay Area
president@lwbba-ca.org

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BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY – Jan.29.2005**“Bay Area Regional Planning – from Vision to Reality”**

This year's Bay Area League Day was well attended by more than 100 attentive, enthusiastic participants. The April/May issue of the Monitor will have a more detailed report. Following is a precis.

Ted Droettboom, Regional Planning Program Director for the MTC, ABAG, BAAQMD Joint Policy Committee (JPC) listed the four areas of regional concern as:

- Housing (population)
- Traffic/transportation (infrastructure)
- Economic activity (jobs)
- Environment/air quality (open space)

He pointed out that there exist agencies that have responsibilities for each area except jobs/economic activity. He also noted how interrelated they all are.

The mandate for the JPC is to promote the Smart Growth Vision. One of the best ways to do this is to “maintain and strengthen existing communities.” Regional collaboration has moved in a mode characterized by “hills and valleys” but it needs to move with “slow measured progress.”

He reported that at the last meeting of the JPC, on Jan. 28, the day before our event, there was consensus to stop agonizing about “the how” and “just do it!” For more info on the JPC: <http://www.abag.ca.gov/jointpolicy/>

As the first speaker on the “Alternative Models for Regional Planning” panel, Revan Tranter, former Executive Director of ABAG, made a point of the importance of planning for 45 years from now. Would we not be in a better position if planning had begun in 1960?

Will Travis, Executive Director of BCDC, said that his training in planning had taught him to ask two questions:

- 1) What do we want to achieve?

2) Why we can't do it with what we have?

Nick Bollman, CEO and President of California Center for Regional Leadership (CCRL), said they organized to add the 4th E, Civic Engagement to sustainable development concepts of Economy, Environment and Equity and are presently working with 20 regional and civic groups. He stated "Regionalism is breaking out all over. " You can learn more about CCRL by going to:

<http://www.calregions.org/>

All the local officials on the "Thinking Regionally, acting Locally" panel agreed that it was easy to get local jurisdictions to talk Smart Growth talk but difficult to get them to walk the walk. Mostly, they said that if you are willing to have rationale and consistent principles you don't fear being thrown out of office for supporting a more regional viewpoint.

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Report on LWV of Fremont-Newark-Union City Monitoring of Sikh Election

Inter-League Participation

Many members from various Bay Area Leagues participated in our election monitoring of the court ordered SIKH temple election on January 9th with ballot counting the following day January 10 at Fremont Police Headquarters. We had 49 volunteers working either a full or half-day on Sunday and/or Monday. We sincerely thank all Bay Area League volunteers who helped us pull this off. It was cold in the morning, promised heaters not arriving until mid-morning. It was dark outside when we met at 7:30 a.m. and dark when we all left at 8:30 p.m. There were some glitches by the Special Master, but our troops preformed above and beyond the call of duty. Over 4,500 voted in the first calm (yes, it was calm compared to the other elections) and neutrally controlled election in years. We had some voters who could only make a mark instead of sign the roster, some who were blind, some who could not speak English, and some who would have their parent or wife vote a certain way. Our volunteers handled it all with grace under pressure and good humor. I honestly do not believe that it would have happened without our assistance. We received thanks not only from the Special Master, but also from Judge Julia Spain who ordered the election. With all of the Sikh community looking on, we rendered a great community service to a large minority group, raised some funds, and raised the esteem and public face of the League. Thank you one and all.

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SAD LOSS

Jean Auer died suddenly on January 8 at the age of 68 while on a ship off the coast of Chile. She got her start as an activist in California's water battles in the LWV. For the past three decades beginning as a member of the State Resources Control Board in 1972, she has served in many capacities relating to state water issues.

Contributions may be made in her memory to the Mission Hospice of San Mateo, 151 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403, or to the Jean Auer Scholarship Fund, in care of the Water Education Foundation, 717 K St., Suite 317, Sacramento, CA 95818.

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Calendar:

Friday, February 4, 2005, 11:30 – 1:30, **Natural Resources/Water Committee**. EBMUD Bldg, 375 11th Street, Oakland., 8th Floor.

Wednesday, February 9, 2005, 12:15 – 2 p.m., **IN Committee North**. Berkeley-Albany-Emeryville League office, 1414 University Avenue Suite D: Phone 510-843-8824.

Thursday, March 10, 2005, 12:15 – 2pm, **IN Committee South**. Menlo Park Library on Alma St. in the LWVSSM office.

Please send agenda items to Iris R. Winogron: programvp@lwbba-ca.org or (510) 482-4439

Friday, April 22, 2005: LWVCEF—Democracy Dinner at the Fairmont Hotel, San Jose. For details see:

http://www.ca.lwv.org/lwvc/donate/demo_dinner_2005.html

SAVE THESE DATES:

Saturday, May 14th, 2005 —LWVBA Council

Saturday, September 24, 2005 — Know Your Bay Area Day

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Web Sites:

Bay Area Monitor: <http://www.bayareamonitor.org>

LWVC: <http://www.ca.lwv.org>

LWVBA: <http://www.lwvba-ca.org>

LWVUS: <http://www.lwv.org>

Smart Voter: <http://www.smartvoter.org>

Barbara Boxer: <http://boxer.senate.gov/>

Dianne Feinstein: <http://feinstein.senate.gov/>

Emails:

Barbara Boxer: senator@boxer.senate.gov

Dianne Feinstein: senator@feinstein.senate.gov

George W. Bush: president@whitehouse.gov

Arnold Schwarzenegger: Governor@Governor.ca.gov