

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS of BUTTE COUNTY
LOCAL ACTION POSITIONS

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INTRODUCTION

A League position is established through concerted study and consensus of the League members. It is a stand of the League on a public issue, which serves as the basis for action. Action includes techniques such as lobbying, legislative testimonies, public statements, public forums, coalitions, litigation and others, all of which must be consistent with League positions and used to achieve League goals and influence public policy.

All state and national positions listed in this publication are Vertical Positions. Vertical Positions are positions that have been approved for use at local levels of League before local governmental officials, without the requirement of prior permission.

The positions are divided into three areas: government, natural resources, and social policy. Each area cover page lists the positions available for action. Utilization of or a reference to state and/or national positions lends credence to local issues through the power of numbers and levels of concern. Objectives listed under the positions are not prioritized.

Whatever the issue, the League of Women Voters believes:

- that representative government and individual liberties are established in the Constitution of the United States
- that democratic government depends on the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records accessible
- that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education that provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination
- that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government
- that responsible government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems which affect the general welfare, and promote a sound economy.

GOVERNMENT – POSITIONS

Under the Government portfolio the following Positions are available for Local Action:

	<u>LOCAL</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>
Butte County Budget Process	Yes	(1)	
Butte County Government Charter	Yes	(2)	
Campaign Financing		Yes	Yes
Constitution		Yes	
Initiative and Referendum		Yes	
Intergovernmental Relationships		Yes	
Public Libraries	Yes	Yes	
Redistricting		Yes	
State and Local Finances		Yes	
Voting Rights		Yes	Yes

- (1) These positions may also contain information relevant to this position: Inter-governmental Relationships, State and Local Finance, U. S. Citizen Rights.
- (2) These positions may also contain information relevant to this position: Inter-governmental Relationships, State and Local Finance, U. S. Citizen Rights.

GOVERNMENT

Butte County Budgeting Process - Position

A Three-Year Study, 1980 – 1982
Reviewed and Clarified, 1992

Support a long-range creative planning process for establishing the annual Butte County Budget.

Objectives of this Position

1. Support methods whereby citizens may provide input to budget and budgeting policies, including advisory boards.
2. Support methods for informing the citizens of county needs and county procedures in the budget process.
3. Encourage increasing county revenue sources by:
 - a. Exploration of profit-making enterprises
 - b. New development fees and establishment of special districts
 - c. Charging fees for direct services
4. Support an objective formula that would establish cost-effective services with a balance between need, number served, geographic area, cost of service and revenue generating potential.
5. Support cost effective contracting for services considering maximum efficiency and type of service.
6. Support policy for the provision of services that will consider needs of citizens versus convenience for county personnel.
7. Support volunteer service where there is no critical dependency.
8. Support a professional budgeting process that uses technically appropriate methods consistent with the above objectives.

GOVERNMENT

Butte County Government: Charter - Position

A Three-Year Study, 1968 – 1971
Update and Revision, 1977

Support of a Butte County Charter that defines actual county government operations, that coordinates legislative and administrative functions, and that is adaptable to changing requirements of county government.

Objectives of this Position

1. Support of a thoroughly revised Butte County, county charter
2. Support inclusion within the County Code for the office of Chief Administrative Officer.
3. Support of the appointment of certain county officers who are now elected and whose jobs are mainly administrative.
4. Support codification and a clear definition of the responsibility and authority of county officers.

GOVERNMENT

Library - Position

Emergency Study, 1990

Support a public library system as a basic community service with a long-term, assured, stable, and adequate funding source.

Support access by all persons to public library services as a major source of knowledge and information necessary for informed, active participation in a democratic society.

Objectives of this Position

1. Increase recognition of the essential nature of public libraries in a democratic society:
 - a. Provision of library services for and to all potential users.
 - b. Provision of adequate hours of service including evening and weekend hours.
 - c. Provision of library resources in keeping with new ideas and technological advances, with an easy-to-use retrieval system.
 - d. Provision of adequate professional and non-professional paid staff.
2. Promote measures to insure the efficiency and economy of library services:
 - a. Consolidation of library functions or systems to achieve cost effectiveness which would not adversely affect the quality of service.
 - b. Continue the use of volunteers to SUPPLEMENT paid staff.
3. Support improvement of library facilities to increase accessibility.
4. Support long-term, assured, stable, and adequate funding for public libraries:
 - a. Public libraries should be funded by government,
 - b. Encourage private contributions to augment library facilities and services.

NATURAL RESOURCES - POSITIONS

Under the Natural Resources portfolio the following Positions are available for Local Action:

	<u>LOCAL</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>
Agriculture	(1)	Yes	Yes
Air Quality		Yes	(2)
Bidwell Park	Yes	(3)	(4)
Energy	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hazardous Materials	(5)	Yes	(2)
Land Use and Planning	Yes	Yes	(4)
Solid Waste	(5)	Yes	(2)
Transportation	Yes	Yes	
Water	Yes	Yes	(2, 4)

- 1) These positions may also contain information relevant to this position:
 - a. Land Use and Planning
 - b. Water

- 2) Relevant positions:
 - a. Environmental Protection
 - b. Pollution Control

- 3) Relevant position:
 - a. Land Use

- 4) Relevant position:
 - a. Resource Management

- 5) Relevant position:
 - a. Water Resources of Butte County

NATURAL RESOURCES

Parks and Greenways - Position

A one-year Study, 2001 – 2002

The League of Women Voters of Butte County believes that community parks and greenways improve the quality of the community as a whole.

1. Procedures for raising and allocating park funds for purchase, improvements, and maintenance should be developed considering all known sources such as grants, development fees, bond monies, and local sponsors.
2. Creekside properties should be acquired for public and environmental benefit as they become available.
3. Creekside greenways should be preserved in their natural state as much as possible, with provisions made for public access, when appropriate.
4. Consideration should be given to using native vegetation. The design for each park should reflect the uniqueness of the area.

Public input regarding the development, improvement, and financing of all parks and greenways should be widely solicited.

BIDWELL PARK - Position

A one-year Study, 1973 – 1974
Revision and Update, 1977
Revision and Update, 1983 – 1984
Reviewed and Clarified, 1992
Revised and Updated, 2001 – 2002

The League of Women Voters of Butte County believes that the integrity of Bidwell Park must be preserved.

Objectives of this Position

1. Uses of the park, including development, upgrading, or expansion of existing facilities, should be compatible with preserving the natural state of the park and its environs. The development of new trails, walkways, and facilities should always take into consideration the impact on the natural environment.
2. The park boundaries should be surveyed to identify park lands and adjacent private ownership to assure compliance with the original deed and to identify sensitive areas near the park to be preserved.

Natural Resources, Bidwell Park Objectives, continued

3. Restricted areas of the park relating to cars, off-road vehicles, equestrians, joggers, bicyclists, and other park users should be clearly identified and, as necessary, posted as an aid in their enforcement. Adequate patrol should be maintained to ensure that rules are followed.
4. Every effort should be made to protect and preserve the natural environment of the park including:
 - a. Funding an environmental assessment and implementing the results;
 - b. Re-vegetation of overused and burned areas with native plants;
 - c. Short and long term controlled burn programs that are supervised by professionals after consultation with wildlife biologists;
 - d. Alternative non-native management should be explored, such as the use of goats, prior to the use of herbicides;
 - e. Surrounding areas should have uses that are compatible with and enhance the natural state of the park;
 - f. When contemplating trails in Upper Park, consideration should be given to the impact on wild life, plant life, and geology. No new trails should be built in Upper Park until a plan is developed and funded for the improvement and maintenance of all trails. Professional consultation regarding trail design and location should be sought.
5. Water quality of Big Chico Creek should be monitored on an on-going basis and the results be made public.
6. Programs and activities which benefit the park, such as the Nature Center and clean-up days, should be adequately funded.
7. The park should continue to be managed by a commission that reflects an active interest in service to the Park.
8. Motorized vehicle use in the park should be restricted to daylight hours unless there are approved nighttime events.
9. Park roads, trails, and crossings should be developed, upgraded, or expanded with the safety of our community members in mind. City and county roads adjacent to the park should reflect speed limits which are appropriate for their proximity to the park.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Energy - Position

A one-year Study, 1974 – 1975
Update and Revision, 1977
Reviewed and Clarified, 1992

Support legislation, public education and programs, especially those of the local level, geared toward energy conservation. Support governmental research and development of energy resources other than nuclear fission, and preferably ones that are environmentally safe, clean, and renewable.

Objectives of this Position

1. Encourage research and development of renewable energy resources such as solar, geothermal, and wind.
2. Encourage the use of clean burning fuels.
3. Support local public education relating to energy resources and conservation.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Land Use and Planning - Position

Planning - Original Study, 1964-1966
Update & Extension, 1971-1972
Land Use - Original Study, 1972-1974
Update, Revision, and Consolidation, 1977
Update and Revision, 1993
Edited and Reorganized, 2007

Land use and planning positions are also found in: Parks and Greenways, Bidwell Park, Energy, Transportation, and Water Resources of Butte County.

Support planning that provides for orderly growth within Butte County in conformity with existing General Plans. General Plans should be kept updated in a timely fashion, following State law, and should fulfill the intent of State law.

Objectives of this Position

1. Planning—General Principles

- a. Support planning that incorporates elements required for state and federal funding and that recognizes LAFCO, ALUC and BCAG as having special responsibilities and authority to represent state requirements in local planning.
- b. Support the use of all available and most current data in making land use and zoning decisions. County and cities should have sufficient professional and clerical staff to promote effective land use decision-making, including monitoring of compliance with EIRs, general plans, mitigation measures, etc.

2. County-Cities Coordination

- a. Support coordination of land use decisions among planning agencies. Support the establishment and utilization of special boundaries, “spheres of influence,” and overlay zones to encourage orderly growth and long-range planning. Such zones may include agricultural lands, green belts, scenic areas, recreational areas, aquifer recharge protection, open space for environmental protection, etc.
- b. Planning agencies and departments should analyze the cumulative impacts of growth and future development both within the planning boundaries and as they affect neighboring jurisdictions and plans should coordinate where county and city boundaries interface and sphere of influence boundaries overlap.
- c. Support coordinated planning for high impact projects, such as shopping areas and school sites.
- d. Support the identification of all the costs of providing urban services and infrastructure. Planning agencies and departments have the responsibility to identify and quantify economic impacts of planning decisions, then identify the source of funding that will pay for those impacts, and also to be certain that mitigations are funded and implemented before they can be accepted as a basis for future planning.

Natural Resources, Land Use and Planning Objectives, continued

3. Public Participation

- a. Support provisions for substantial public participation with legal requirements representing a minimum, not the limit, of public involvement. Appointees should represent a broad cross-section of the community.
- b. Support adoption by local governmental agencies of simple, uniform notification procedures of land use processes and decisions.
- c. Planning agencies and departments have the responsibility to make the public aware of vacancies on planning boards, notices of planning actions, land use and zoning changes. Planning department websites should be kept up-to-date on all agendas, plans, ordinances, public hearings and notifications of public comment periods, etc.

4. Standards--Urban Development

- a. Support the integrity of new and existing communities by providing for open space around them, including preservation of natural riparian habitats and woodlands. Also provide useable open recreational space within the urban areas.
- b. Support preservation of the downtown city centers.
- c. Support improvements, such as sewers, sidewalks, drainage, curbs, light, fire hydrants, and parking, as appropriate. Planning should include consideration of the availability of water for any new development and consideration of the costs of providing urban services and infrastructure.
- d. Support mixed housing for all socio-economic groups.

5. Standards-Agricultural Lands

- a. Support efforts to preserve prime agricultural land by encouraging appropriate agricultural zoning (i.e. parcel sizes large enough to support an economic unit) and the elimination of A-2 type zoning that encourages "leapfrog" development.
- b. Support Butte County's "right to farm ordinance" and discourage industry not essential to the processing of agricultural commodities from locating in agricultural areas.
- c. Support integrated pest management practices to reduce the use of hazardous materials.

6. Standards--Open Space

- a. Support the establishment of special overlay zones (green belts, scenic and recreational areas, watersheds, wetlands, native vegetation, wildlife habitat, migratory corridors and open space) to encourage orderly growth and long range planning.
- b. Support utilization of land banks for public acquisition of land where development is undesirable.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Transportation - Position

Created April 1983
Revision and Update, 1997

Support balanced systems of transportation providing mobility with efficiency and safety. Reduce dependence on the single occupant automobile by providing safe, interconnected modes of transportation.

Objectives of this Position

1. Encourage public transportation, safe and convenient bicycle thoroughfares, paths, walkways and footbridges that allow the public safe, viable alternatives to trips by automobile. Support education and programs that encourage the public to use cars prudently.
2. Support highway planning that will route heavy and industrial through-traffic off downtown and residential streets.
3. Support door-to-door services for handicapped and elderly citizens.
4. Support fixed-route bus systems within Butte County that are connected to other transportation systems.
5. Support the concept that a secure and economically vigorous community needs an airport to provide fire protection and disaster relief, meet medical needs, and provide other time-sensitive services.
6. Support development at airports and their surrounding areas that conforms to regulatory guidelines, represents compatible land use and provides protection from cumulative encroachments by high density or other sensitive developments that may restrict aircraft operations.
7. Support transportation programs addressing air quality.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Water Resources of Butte County - Position

Two-year Study, 1975-76
Reviewed and Clarified, 1992 and 2002

Support measures that will provide for the development and management of water resources in ways that are beneficial to the environment, economy, and the quality of life in Butte County, and that recognize that hydro-geologic boundaries do not follow political subdivisions.

Objectives of this Position

1. Protect groundwater from contamination and exploitation by:
 - a. Using Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and the County Geographic Information System (GIS) to locate recharge zones and wells.
 - b. Protecting function and capacity of recharge zones.
 - c. Protecting watersheds
 - d. Using effective wellhead protection and well abandonment procedures.
2. Identify all third-party (i.e. hydrological and community economic) impacts to establish the “value” of water as opposed to its “price”.
 - a. Identify economic impacts (including administrative costs) in advance of any water transfers.
 - b. Require mitigation payments and actions to be concurrent with water reallocations from following, water transfers, and environmental acquisitions.
3. Urge Butte County to establish an office to centralize water records and make that information available to the public in a timely manner.
4. Monitor government entities to assure that water management decisions are the result of a public process.
5. Encourage use of watersheds and basins as an organizational vehicle encompassing community interests in water management.
6. Urge zoning ordinances and planning map overlays which could control and direct development in ecologically sensitive areas, such as:
 - a. Those adjacent to rivers or streams
 - b. Physically hazardous areas, such as flood plains, steep slopes
 - c. High fire risk areas
 - d. Geologically hazardous areas
 - e. Areas with known limited availability of water.

Natural Resources, Water Resources of Butte County Objectives, continued

7. Strengthen the conservation element in the general plans by specific identification of mandatory items and the inclusion of the non-mandatory items recommended in the State General Plan Guidelines current code:
 - a. Reclamation of land and waters
 - b. Flood control
 - c. Prevention and control of the pollution of streams and other waters
 - d. Regulation of the use of land in stream channels and other areas required for the accomplishment of the conservation plan
 - e. Prevention, control, and correction of the erosion of soils, beaches, and shores
 - f. Protection of watersheds
 - g. Location, quantity and quality of rock, sand, and gravel resources
8. All water districts should write into their by-laws a clause insuring their compliance with the Butte County General Plan.
9. Develop a county master water plan to incorporate the total water management concept (source, quantity, quality, disposal, and economics).
10. Encourage and support the Local agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) in establishing the primary, secondary, and tertiary spheres of influence for water service districts that reflect hydro-geologic reality and then to act within the framework of good planning.
11. Encourage participation of Butte County in regional water resource planning.

SOCIAL POLICY

Under the Social Policy portfolio the following Positions are available for Local Action:

	<u>LOCAL</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u>NATIONAL</u>
Child Care	(1)	yes	(2)
Education	yes	yes	(2)
Health Care Delivery	yes	yes	
Housing	yes	yes	(2 & 3)
Juvenile Justice	yes	yes	
Legal Aid	(4)	yes	
Mental Health Care	yes		
Social Services Funding by Local Governments	yes		

- (1) Position may also contain relevant information pertaining to this position: Juvenile Justice
- (2) Relevant position: Equality of Opportunity
- (3) Relevant position: Meeting Basic Human Needs
- (4) Relevant position: Social Services Funding by Local Governments

SOCIAL POLICY

Education - Position

Two-Year Study, 1978 – 1980
Reviewed and Clarified, 1992

Support for a local public educational system that maintains a broad spectrum of program offerings to promote career training, citizenship responsibility, and personal growth, as well as the academic basics, and that continues the philosophy of broad public financial support of schools.

Objectives of this Position

1. Support top priority in financial considerations being given to the classroom teaching program.
2. Support for the neighborhood school concept for younger children. At upper levels support facilities utilization, including flexible staff, which would promote the broadest possible educational offerings.
3. Support for parents/guardians assuming greater responsibility in the area of school programs.
4. Support for continuity in goals, skills, and concepts, with flexibility in approach, in grades K-12, with the objective that a student could transfer from one school to another in a given district without loss of continuity.
5. Support for concept of mainstreaming of children in special education programs, as long as the best interests of all students are served, and the special education student can be integrated into the classroom without infringement of the educational rights of the other students.
6. Support for the concept that enrichment programs and offerings are basic to education.
7. Support for alternatives in education programs.
8. Support for hiring and evaluation procedures that promote a well-balanced, high-quality staff, and for administering, implementing, and monitoring of these procedures.
9. Recognition of the fact that pupil/teacher ratio is an important aspect of quality education, and support for a system that will allow as much individual attention as possible, particularly at the primary level.
10. Support for provisions for educational services being made by those responsible for new growth development within the school district.

Social Policy, Education Objectives, continued

11. Support for periodic review and evaluation of district policies by the boards of education.
12. Support a commitment to long-range planning:
 - a. A long-range plan should be developed and used and should address all departments and services.
 - b. All government entities should work together in planning.
 - c. Cooperation with other public agencies and/or use of private contractors should be encouraged when financially advantageous and when doing so meets required criteria.
 - d. When making financial decisions and gathering financial information, the boards of education should seek direct input from a variety of sources and in-depth professional advice.
13. Support for the promotion and fostering of public awareness through every phase of the school operation.
14. Support for the concept that each of the following segments of society is responsible for the community's educational program:
 - a. Electorate;
 - b. Board of Directors;
 - c. Administration;
 - d. Teachers;
 - e. Parents;
 - f. Students;
 - g. The media.

SOCIAL POLICY

Health Care Delivery - Position

Two-Year Study, 1974 – 1976
Reviewed and Clarified, 1992

Support programs that meet the medical needs of Butte County residents by making adequate health care services available to all socioeconomic groups.

Objectives of this Position

1. Support for recruitment, training, and use of paramedical and medical personnel.
2. Support development of outpatient clinics.
3. Support use of sliding scale in provision of medical services.
4. Support a county-wide system that would provide information, linkage, translation, transportation, and other health-related services.
5. Support for adequate dental health services.
6. Promote nutritional education.
7. Promote cooperation in use of regional programs.
8. Promote vigorous dissemination of information to the public of available health programs.
9. Encourage aggressive regulatory supervision and upgrading of environmental health including: air, water, hazardous substances and waste materials, food handlers, and inspection of restaurants.
10. Support availability of crisis counseling.
11. Support follow-up care of mentally impaired individuals.
12. Promote and support the inclusion of public members on mandated health advisory boards.
13. Encourage and support County coordination and availability of public mental health and crises services.

SOCIAL POLICY

Housing - Position

Restudy and Update, 1977 - 1978
Reviewed and Clarified, 1992

Support of programs adequate to meet the housing needs of Butte County residents – to provide equality of opportunity and an adequate supply of housing for all socioeconomic groups.

Objectives of this Position

1. Foster non-discrimination practices.
2. Eliminate substandard housing by backing code enforcement in county and cities for the benefit and safety of the general public.
3. Support of programs that use private as well as public funds.
4. Urge local government to seek adequate funding for federal housing programs:
 - a. Support additional housing programs for the elderly, the very low income, migrant labor, and the homeless.
 - b. Encourage small developments, such as low income housing, dispersed throughout the community in preference to a large development.
5. Support development of additional residential care facilities, both self-supporting and subsidized.
6. Support adequate off-site improvements, such as sewers, sidewalks, adequate streets, drainage, curbs, lights, fire hydrants, and parking for all housing.
7. Support increased density such as “Planned Area Clusters” with adequate open space as a possible way to minimize site and service costs of conventional housing.
8. Support the Landlord-Tenant Grievance Resolution Board.
9. Encourage coordination of housing efforts between cities and county – private and public sectors.
10. Support adherence of local government to HUD Guidelines:
 - a. Support meeting the legal requirements of citizen orientation and participation in redevelopment programs.
 - b. Support energy conservation in all HUD sponsored redevelopment programs.
 - c. Encourage local government entities to provide interim relocation housing for people displaced by code enforcement and other public acts.

Social Policy, Housing Objectives, continued

11. Support limited rent control on homes rehabilitated through low-interest government loans.
12. Support local condo conversion regulation to insure that condo conversion does not threaten adequate housing supply for all socioeconomic groups.

SOCIAL POLICY

Juvenile Justice - Position

One-Year Study, 1972
Update and Revision, 1984 - 1987

Support of programs providing humane professional services that emphasize early identification of needs and prevention of problems confronting the youth of Butte County.

Objectives of this Position

1. Support the need for adequate funding and coordination of resources for services to youth.
2. Support the establishment of “warm-supportive” places, such as youth drop-in centers.
3. Support the establishment of crisis counseling services including a 24-hour crisis telephone, drop-in day care service for troubled youth.
4. Support for adequate psychological counseling services both in and out of the public school system, including free or sliding-scale fee schedules.
5. Support the development of alternative care, in lieu of Juvenile Hall, for youth.
6. Continued support of the educational program at Juvenile Hall.
7. Support services providing adequate health and mental health care, including prevention and treatment of substance abuse.
8. Support programs to provide education and services to alleviate the problems of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

SOCIAL POLICY

Social Services Funding by Local Governments - Position

One-Year Study, 1985 - 1986
Reviewed and Clarified, 1992

Support funding of social services to alleviate unmet needs of the citizens of Butte County through a combination of local government and private sector grants.

Support the concept that:

1. the funding of social services for the primary basic needs of food and shelter should essentially be provided by the Federal Government; and
2. that the other basic needs of education, medical (including physical and mental health needs), employment, and protective services should be met by a combination of funding through the Federal Government supplemented by state and local governments.

Objectives of this Position

1. Support city and county governments in their efforts to explore and achieve funding resources for social services.
2. Promote and encourage cooperative and coordinated funding efforts between private and social service agencies and local governments.