

GOVERNMENT

City Government

Government Structures and Procedure: LWVSD supports city government with structures and procedures that promote responsive, responsible and efficient government with adequate checks and balances of power, with equal opportunities for citizens and with provisions for citizen participation. (2009)(2016)

Citizen Participation: City government should facilitate accountability and citizen participation within its structures and procedures, which should be:

Efficient and Effective

- Providing the simplest structure to serve clearly defined purposes and functions, avoiding unnecessary duplication and taking advantage of cost-saving technologies.
- Providing for the ~~adequate~~ analysis of costs and benefits of offices and programs that takes into account social, economic, and political considerations and that utilize community expertise.
- Providing for regular review and termination of offices or programs if their purpose is not achieved or a function becomes obsolete.
- Having a direct effect upon decision-making and providing necessary leadership orientation.

Equitable

- Providing services and opportunities for participation on an equitable basis to all areas of the city, with due consideration for differing neighborhood needs.
- ~~Providing for citizen input which is representative of geographic areas and social composition.~~

Accessible

- Providing easily available and sufficient information to citizens to receive services and to participate, with times and locations of meetings and costs to participants considered.
- Providing for public access to meetings, agendas, reports, and records of meetings and persons making decisions.

Forward-Looking:

- Articulating a coherent perspective of the present and future directions of a city, with attention to long and medium range planning and to the marshaling of resources to provide the necessary infrastructure for such a perspective. (1995) (2016)

City Council: Council members should be nominated and elected by districts; they should have salaries and staff commensurate with full-time responsibilities as the city's legislative and

policy-making body. In the event of a vacancy on the council, a special district election should be held if the vacancy is for a year or more. If the vacancy is for less than a year, it should be filled by appointment as provided in the city's charter. (1983) ~~There needs to be adequate~~ **A balance of power is necessary** between the legislative branch and the administrative branch of city government. Members of the City Council should elect a Council president to serve a term of one year. The Council president should set the Council agenda. Three or more Council members should have authority to place an item for consideration on the docket. The City Council should take responsibility for ensuring that legislation and policies that have been enacted are carried out. (2009) **(2016)**

Mayor: The mayor should have salary and staff commensurate with full-time responsibilities. (1995) The mayor should be involved in the planning of the budget from the beginning of the budget process. (2000) In the event of a vacancy in the office of mayor, a special election should be held if the vacancy is for a year or more. (1983) **If less than one year, then the President of the Council should serve as mayor the balance of the year.** The mayor should respond to requests for information from the public or the city council in a timely manner. ~~It is very important that~~ The mayor **should also** arrange to hear concerns from individual citizens and citizen groups on a regular and consistent basis in a public venue. (2009) **(2016)**

~~**Chief Operating Officer:** The qualifications required of the city's chief operating officer should be defined in the city charter. (2009)~~

Standards for Redistricting: (1989) (2016)

The redistricting process should include:

- specific timelines for the steps leading to adoption of the redistricting plan;
- public hearings on the plan proposed for adoption;
- an automatic, non-judicial backup procedure in the event of a deadlock; **and**
- a requirement that any redistricting plan drawn be adopted by more than a simple majority vote.

Redistricting plan standards, regardless of who has responsibility for redistricting should include:

- substantially equal populations;
- geographic contiguity **and compactness**;
- protection from diluting voting strength of a racial or linguistic minority; **and**
- preservation and protection of "communities of interest" to the extent possible.

The redistricting plan standards should not allow the goal of protecting incumbents or preferential treatment of one political party. Each district should consist of 100,000-150,000 people or less.

Redistricting should be done by a special non-partisan commission. The preferred method is the formation of a redistricting commission by having:

- ~~each council member submit to the mayor the names of 3 nominees from which the mayor shall appoint one to serve;~~ an Appointing Authority consisting of a three member panel of retired judges plus an alternate in order to preclude appointments being made by only two members;
- ~~the mayor appoint another person who shall be the presiding officer of the commission;~~ a nine member commission to allow for the possibility of a representative from each Council District; and
- ;
- the commission include representatives of minority group interests and public interest groups.; and (2017)
- ~~all appointed members confirmed by the city council. (Charter Review Commission recommendation, (1989) (2016).~~

Planning Department: LWVSD supports a separate planning department headed by a planning director reporting directly to the mayor or city council. Functions performed by this department should include: preparation of the general plan and community plans; preparation of project plans; management of land use and development; coordination and review of plans and projects with other departments and jurisdictions; active participation in the preparation of the capital budget; research in cooperation with other agencies; public service and education; environmental review.

LWVSD supports including, as part of a general plan, an implementation program which includes a capital improvements program and commitment to facilities financing.

LWVSD supports **maintenance** of a general plan, **preparation of an annual progress report on achievement of general plan goals, objectives and policies and where appropriate, amendments as needed.** ~~updating a city's general plan every five (5) years. Updating~~ **Maintaining** the plan should be an on-going process using available technology with extensive public participation. Sufficient funding and personnel should be dedicated to the process to ~~enable meeting the five-year goal.~~ **keep it current**(1996) (2017)

Police Protection: Support of adequate funding for (1) an efficient police protection and crime prevention system and (2) community involvement in crime prevention programs.

Police-Community Relations: The City Council has the responsibility for police-community relations policies and programs within the entire police department and the community. The City Council should **regularly evaluate and reassess** ~~present~~ policies for complaint procedures. ~~aimed at including citizen participation in the procedure. (before 1971)~~ There should be continued training, especially in areas of human relations, **behavioral health and sexual assault;** high standards for police personnel ~~(1975);~~ and ~~salary~~ salaries competitive with that of other large cities in the state. (1984) (2016) **The League supports having a Community Review Board on Police Practices. It should have the power to investigate all in-custody deaths and officer involved shootings. In order to better carry out its responsibilities, the Board should have an independent attorney and the subpoena power. (2017)**

Civil Service System of Employment (1975) (2016)

City government should maintain a civil service system of employment, which is guided by the principles of political neutrality, job competition by merit and equal opportunity for all through a commitment to the affirmative action needed to make openness of employment a reality.

Political Neutrality: Politics should be completely separated from all aspects of classified employment, recruitment, hiring, firing, promotion, and disciplinary action.

Structure: The system should include job classification and a balance of power and responsibility shared by a civil service commission, the mayor and council, and the city attorney.

Recruiting and Selection: In order to employ qualified, competent people who represent a broad spectrum of the community and are committed to public service, a city should:

- base selection on job-related skills;
- advertise job opportunities through all forms of the news media and provide wide knowledge of and access to job bulletins;
- ~~expand the minimum job application time period;~~
- conduct on-going evaluations of minimum requirement with emphasis on individual background;
- credit **related** volunteer and part-time experience as job qualifications;
- inform applicants of their rights in the employment process;
- **ensure** ~~counsel~~ applicants so ~~those individuals~~ understand the job descriptions and how their qualifications apply to city jobs;
- conduct job-related oral interviews utilizing uniform questions and selecting citizen interviewers from all segments of the community;
- develop training and apprentice programs; **and**
- ~~Give consideration to veterans in the hiring process.~~

Working Conditions: A ~~The City needs to develop~~ should **maintain** procedures and incentives to encourage **diversity** in the hiring of employees and further encourage present employees to pursue career opportunities **and** promotional exams should be open to city employees as well as those outside city employment. Employees should be periodically evaluated for their competence and supervisors should create a positive atmosphere to achieve efficient employee performance. Probationary employees should be given rights of appeal.

Equal Opportunity: A ~~The City has the obligation to follow~~ **legal** hiring ~~be the leader in using~~ affirmative action procedures in all employment processes (recruiting, testing, selection, hiring, and promotion) to include more women and minorities in the work force and it should utilize statistics to assure attainment of its **affirmative action hiring** goals. ~~Affirmative action goals should be determined by comparing the number of men, women, and minorities actually~~

~~employed by a city in all job classifications at all levels with the number available and qualified in the local work force. (1974, 1975)-(2016)~~

Fiscal Management

Revenues: A flexible and equitable structure should include revenues derived from sources based on an ability to pay, with a combination of local, state, and federal revenues and with low administrative costs compared to revenue produced. (1991) (2016)

Budget Development: At the beginning of the annual budget cycle, the mayor shall propose a balanced budget for consideration by the City Council. (2017)The City Council should set priorities and guidelines for the chief operating officer to use in preparing the budget. (1976) The mayor should ~~planning~~ also prepare a multi-year financial forecast at the beginning of the annual budget process. There should be an independent budget analyst available to the mayor and the council members. (2000) Public hearings should be held at this **early and throughout in the budgeting process**. Local control and flexibility are essential in the budgeting process. (2017)~~stage. (1991-2017)~~

~~**Service Codes:** **User Fees:** User charges or fees are acceptable when the cost of service can be measured, the benefit of service is directly derived by individual or property, administrative costs are relatively low; and there is provision for persons unable to pay fees or charges levied on essential community-wide services (such as trash collection). It is more desirable to rely on general fund financing rather than establish special funds for those services which benefit the entire community or promote general health, welfare and safety. User charges are acceptable when the cost of service can be measured, the benefit of service is directly derived by individual or property, administrative costs are relatively low; and there is provision for persons unable to pay fees or charges levied on essential community wide services (such as trash collection).~~

Federal and State Funds: Funds from other governmental levels should be sought when compatible with long-range planning and community needs and when local government is involved in the planning and administration of such funds.

Capital Improvements and Bonding: **Given a major backlog of infrastructure improvements, the League endorses an Infrastructure Fund which sets aside a portion of General Fund revenues for capital improvements and infrastructure. However,** bonding is the most desirable method of financing capital improvements and local government should make greater use of its bonding capacity, with general obligation bonds preferred over methods which incur continuing liabilities without voter approval. (2016) As part of the annual budget process, the Mayor should propose an updated multi-year capital improvements program. Revenue bonds may be used where there is a specific revenue stream in place to fund a particular improvement or improvements. Revenue bonds should require a 2/3 approval of the City Council. Proceeds from the sale of city-owned property are another acceptable form of funding capital improvements. (2017)

Transient Occupancy Tax

League supports:

- a TOT budget and TOT fund that are clear and user-friendly for appropriate public use. The fund balance should be publicly reported annually;
- a collaborative strategic planning process to establish TOT funding priorities.
- a TOT administrator responsible for all TOT –related business, who reports to the mayor. Responsibilities include administering the TOT ordinance, strategic planning, developing and implementing measures of efficiency and effectiveness of programs and making financial records available for auditing.
- not limiting the Special Promotional Programs share of TOT funds to promoting growth related to the tourism industry;
- restoration of the contribution of TOT funds to the Housing Trust Fund;
- basing the TOT rate on the rates charged by competing cities. The rate should take into account potential negative impact on the tourism industry; and
- full cost recovery from TOT to serve visitors. (2002)

Options for Unincorporated Communities (1988) (2016)

Support efforts of communities to achieve self-government with equality of representation and efficient delivery of needed services.