



League of Women Voters®  
of Jefferson County, Colorado

# PROGRAM AND HISTORY

An Indispensable Resource for Leaguers

The principles and positions that guide the League's active participation in local government.

Revised June 2011

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of Jefferson County, CO  
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*The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization,  
promotes informed and active participation in government  
and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*

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### TAKING ACTION AS AN INDIVIDUAL:

Individual League members are always free to take action on whatever they choose; as long as they do so in their own name, and leave no impression that they speak for the League.

### MISSION OF THE LWV:

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, promotes informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Revised Edition 2011

*Updated by Marcia Schafer, Patty Schoedler, Karil Frohboese and Cath Perrone*

## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORY *FIRST IN THE COUNTRY*

In the early 1950's so much of Jefferson County was unincorporated open land that women who wanted to belong to the League of Women Voters joined the Denver League. It was obvious; however, that many items of interest to Jefferson County residents could not be studied by the Denver League. Ignoring the predictions that a county League would never work, a "Know Your County" study was begun in 1952 in anticipation of applying for provisional status as a separate league.

The Jefferson County League, the first county League in the United States, was organized on May 27, 1953 with a membership of about sixty women in three units. The Board meetings were held in a milk house office on an old farm. During the first year as a provisional League, "Know Your County" was completed and seventy-five copies were given or sold outside the membership. An education committee was also established. In January of 1954, the national board of the League of Women Voters gave full recognition to the League of Women Voters of Jefferson County. All subsequent county Leagues were patterned after it.

In addition to time spent on issues of state and national concern, the ensuing years have brought the adoption of Local Study Items followed by committee research, appropriate publications, meetings for consensus or concurrence, and finally position statements with a focus on action. All this is contained in the following pages. However, there are a few highlights worth mentioning.

While actively campaigning for passage of a school bond issue in 1955, League's participation in a bond rally and parade were seen on Edward R. Murrow's "See It Now" television program. The first candidates' meeting was held in 1958. Having League observers attend public meetings in 1960 was the start of the Observer Corps. At the same time, a study of county fiscal structure resulted in a publication, "Quo Vadit", which was purchased by the school district for each junior and senior high school and school administrative officials.

In 1964, local leagues began to undertake additional studies limited to their own areas. The Jeffco League hired its first part-time office secretary in 1965. Another milestone was reached in 1966 when the Jeffco League joined with other area Leagues to form the League of Women Voters of Metro Denver. It was dissolved in 1991. Today, we are known as the League of Women Voters of Jefferson County, Colorado.

Certain traditions have evolved over the years: the Annual Legislators Breakfast (providing a preview of the upcoming state legislative session), member meetings with the County Commissioners and the School Board of Education, the Citizens Guide yearly publication and our monthly newsletter, the VOICE. Our newest tradition is our website at [www.lwvjeffco.org](http://www.lwvjeffco.org) providing up to date information to our members and the public.

Our board organization has changed over the years. During the 1990's the practice of sharing Board positions started, culminating with three "co"- presidents, 1997-1999. Other positions which have been shared include: 1st Vice President (program), 2nd Vice President (organization), and Voters Service. Today's Board is comprised of twelve positions; President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President / Program, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President / Unit Liaison, Secretary, Treasurer, Action, Finance, Historian, Membership, Public Relations and Voter Service. In addition there are four portfolio chairs to support our program; Government, Natural Resources, Social Policy and International Relations.

The action reported in this booklet has been taken at the local level. No action or lobbying at the state or national level is reported. Please refer to the National League [Impact On Issues](#) and the LWVCO [Program for Study and Action](#) publications for more information on the national and state positions and actions.

## PRINCIPLES OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNITED STATES

The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States. The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that all powers of the U.S. Government should be exercised within the constitutional framework of a balance among the three branches of government: legislative, executive and judicial.

The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation in governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

The League of Women Voters believes 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.

The League of Women Voters believes 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.

The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that 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 that affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems.

The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems and that development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

## JEFFERSON COUNTY PRESIDENTS

1953	Velma Muelengracht	1983	Deloris Olsen	2007	Cath Perrone
1955	Beverly Hunt	1985	Jo Rock	2008	Robera Kreutzfeld
1957	Margaret Fischer	1987	Purnee McCourt	2009	Gwen Lipkie
1959	Barbara Courtney	1989	Kay Marsh	2010	Jo Rock, Karil Frohese
1960	Cynthia Daniels	1991	Ruth Wells		
1961	Charlotte Hoops	1993	Marcia Schafer		
1965	Wanda Babb	1995	Ann Neshofer		
1967	Bobbie Cromwell	1997	Kathy Glass, Jo Rock, Patty Schoedler		
1969	Bette Seeland	1999	Sue Chichester		
1971	Fran Yehle	2000	Gwen Lipkie		
1973	Judy Carstens	2001	Gari Westkott		
1975	Pat Mesec	2002	Carol Coppock, Kathy Reul		
1975	Nancy Miller	2003	Flodie Anderson		
1977	Carol Wilson	2004	Marjory Beal		
1979	Judi Steele	2005	Marian Downs		
1980	Anita Ging	2006	Adrienne Andrews-Glenn		

**JEFFERSON COUNTY PROGRAM  
LOCAL PROGRAM IN BRIEF**

**GOVERNMENT**

- Governmental Solutions Support of governmental solutions most suitable to the needs of Jefferson County.
- Boards and Commissions Support of structures, procedures and practices for elected and appointed boards and commissions which insure accountability, representativeness, decision-making capability, effective performance and openness.
- County Government Support for increasing county commissioners from three to five members.
- Library Support for the property tax as the primary means of funding a library system.

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

- Land Use Support of an integrated, total county approach to planning which provides for the diverse needs of the members of the community while ensuring environmental quality. Support of county-wide wildfire mitigation efforts.
- Open Space Support of the Jefferson County Open Space program as a county-wide program, funded by a sales tax. Support of procedures and criteria for the use of Open Space funds for development.
- Environmental Hazards Support of measures which provide residents with notification of hazards (including wildfire hazards), safety measures and warning systems, related to man-made or natural hazards.
- Noise Pollution Support of implementation of noise standards by local governments with adequate funding for enforcement.
- Sustainability Support of a way of life, which seeks to balance environmental, economic, and human needs, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet the same goal.

**SOCIAL POLICY**

- Education:  
Administration and Finance Support of policies, which promote efficient administrative and financial practices in the Jefferson County School District.
- Quality Education Support for a Jefferson County School budget that provides a high quality of education for all.
- Housing Support of diversified types and densities of housing in well planned communities. Support of shelters and transitional housing in Jefferson County as emergency and short term housing measures with emphasis on assisting people to become self-sufficient.
- Health Care Services Support of Jefferson County government leadership in developing health policy and in facilitating and coordinating delivery of physical and mental health care services for county residents. High priority is placed on preventive care, primary care and emergency care. Health services should be evaluated in terms of accountability, availability, and equitable financing.

### **LOCAL STUDY ITEMS 1953-1979**

- 1953 Know Your County
- 1954 Administrative and Financial Structure of Jefferson County Schools
- 1955 Health and Sanitation Facilities in Jefferson County
- 1956 Comparative Forms of County Government and Related Problems
- 1957 State Constitutional and Statutory Provisions of County Government
- 1958 An Analysis of Jefferson County Government
- 1959 Governmental Solutions and Regional Cooperation
- 1960 County Fiscal Structure: Efficient and Economical Practices
- 1961 Education; County Fiscal Structure
- 1962 Educational Standards; Incorporation
- 1963 Consolidation of Previous Studies on Local Government
- 1964 County Parks and Recreation
- 1965 Review of All Studies and Directives for Effective Action
- 1966 Air Pollution; Planning and Zoning
- 1967 Planning and Zoning; Evergreen's Governmental Needs; Arvada—Special Districts
- 1968 Budget of R-1 Schools
- 1969 Review of Local Government Positions
- 1970 Housing
- 1971 Lakewood; Mountain Land Use
- 1972 Mountain Land Use; Open Space; County Home Rule
- 1973 County Home Rule; Health Services; Land Use Planning
- 1974 Know Your Communities: Wheat Ridge and Evergreen; Boards and Commissions;  
Revised Standards on Education
- 1975 Administrative and Financial Structure of the School District; Know Your  
Communities: Mountain Parks, Arvada and Evergreen
- 1976 Continued 1975 Studies
- 1977 Noise Pollution; Open Space and Recreation; Evergreen Study of Alternative Forms of  
Local Government; Know Your Community: Lakewood
- 1978 Evergreen and Lakewood Studies continued; Know Your County; Housing; Jefferson  
County Budget
- 1979 Know Your County; Environmental Hazards

### **LOCAL STUDY ITEMS 1980 - 2009**

- 1980 Know Your County; County Home Rule (update); Know Your Community: Chatfield
- 1981 Environmental Hazards (update); Housing (update); Evergreen's Growth and Development
- 1982 Alternative Methods of Funding Education
- 1983 No New Study
- 1984 Quality Education; Open Space
- 1985 Library
- 1986 Boards and Commissions Reevaluation
- 1987 Know Your Community: Golden; Health Services
- 1988 Health Services
- 1989 Health Services
- 1990 Housing
- 1991 Education
- 1992 Education
- 1993 Land Use Policies; Education
- 1994 No New Study
- 1995 Education: Site-based Management, Special Education; Land Use: Old Plats; Know Your Community: Chatfield
- 1996 A Study of Zoning; Know Your Community: South Jefferson County
- 1997 Welfare in Jefferson County
- 1998 Financing County Government and Services
- 1999 Restorative and Community Justice
- 2000 No New Program
- 2001 Study of Programs for Troubled Youth in Schools; Education: Effectiveness of Alternative Methods of Educating Students; Update of Housing; Update of Current Election Process and Technology
- 2002 Health Care Policies; Juvenile Sex Offenders Treatment Facilities and Programs
- 2003 Study of Health Care Conditions, Options and Policies including the CHP+ in Jeffco; Study of Placement and Treatment of Juvenile Sex Offenders in Jeffco; Study of Scientific and Cultural Facilities District Tax and its Benefits for Jeffco organizations
- 2004 Eminent Domain; Survey of Special Districts
- 2005 Study of Options for Jefferson County Government; Evaluation of Open Space Budget with Emphasis on Funds for Maintenance; Study of Lakewood Sales Tax Increase
- 2006 Study to Examine Intolerance in Society and Its Relationship to the Erosion of Personal Liberties; Emergency Preparedness in Jefferson County; Sex Offenders in the Court System
- 2007 Governance of Library System; Wildfire Mitigation; Renewable Energy in Jeffco; Fastracks Update
- 2008 Economic Aspects of Open Space; Examine Current Status of Jefferson County Justice System; Homelessness in Jefferson County and Services provided by Local Agencies; Sustainability
- 2009 Study of Sheriff's Office; Youthful Sexual Offender Programs, Homes and Centers in Jefferson County; Sustainability continued; Civics Education in Jefferson County

## PUBLICATIONS 1953 - 2009

- 1953 "Know Your County"  
1954 "Kids, Cash and Cold Facts" ; "School Keeps"  
1955 "Sewage: Your Problem and Mine"  
1956 "Alternatives for our Present County Government:  
1957 "How Your Jefferson County Government Operates"  
1960 "Quo Vadit"  
1961 "Schools in Review"; "Community Mental Health Clinics"  
1962 "Distribution of Jefferson County Property Taxes"  
1963 "Before the Roof Falls In"; "Home Rule for Arvada"  
1964 "Parks and Recreation in Jefferson County"; "How Your Jefferson County Government Operates"  
1965 "This Is Arvada"  
1966 "What's Going On Up Here?"  
1967 "Study of Planning and Zoning in Jefferson County"  
1968 "It's Your Decision"  
1970 "Environmental Geology in Our Own Backyard"  
1971 "Summertime Discovery"; "Fire Chutes"  
1972 "This Is Lakewood"; "Mountain Puzzle"  
1973 "Golden"; "Jefferson County Department of Health and Related Service"  
1974 "ABC's of Appointed Boards and Commissions"  
1975 "Wheat Ridge: Who? What? Where?"; "Housing For All—How?"  
1976 "Know Your Community: Evergreen"  
1977 "Our Schools—Let's Communicate"; "Mount Vernon Canyon to Bergen Park"  
"Arvada: Know Your City"; "Open Space and Recreation in Jefferson County"  
1978 "This Is Lakewood"  
1979 "Jefferson County Budget"; "Land Use"  
1980 "Possible Environmental Hazards in Jefferson County, Parts I and II"; "Open Space and Recreation in Jefferson County"  
1981 "Where We Live—South Jefferson County"  
1983 "A Citizen's Guide to Jefferson County, Colorado"  
1984 "Jefferson County Open Space, 1973-1984"  
1986 "The Library Study"; "Boards and Commissions in Jefferson County"  
1987 "Golden, Colorado: Challenging Past and Future"  
1989 "Health Care Services in Jefferson County"  
1990 "Housing in Jefferson County"  
1992 "Education: The Changing Scene"  
1994 "The Planning and Zoning Maze"  
1995 "The Regulation and Impacts of Individual Sewage Disposal Systems in Jefferson County"; "New Choices: A Look at Five Jefferson County School Options"; "Academic Excellence, A Guide to Selecting the Right School"; "Nuclear Waste at Rocky Flats: Our Cold War Legacy", *Rocky Flats Video*  
1997 "Local Wetlands: A Community Perspective"; "How to Evaluate a School Board Candidate"  
1999 "Moving Jefferson County into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, A Study of Financing County Government and Service" ; "Jefferson County Division of Human Services in Transition"  
2000 "Democracy"  
2001 "Legal and Policy Issues Related to Gays and Lesbians"  
2002 "A Whole Lot of Choices: A Look at Jefferson County's Option and Charter Schools"; "Programs that Identify, Assess, Assist, and Monitor Troubled or At-Risk Youth in Jefferson County"  
2003 "Health Care in Jefferson County: The Changing Picture"  
2007 "A Whole Lot of Choices: A Look at Jefferson County's Option and Charter Schools, An Update"

## GOVERNMENT GOVERNMENTAL SOLUTIONS

### **POSITION IN BRIEF:**

Support of governmental solutions most suitable to the needs of Jefferson County. County government should be responsive, representative and efficient. Governmental units should be encouraged to cooperate with other governmental units in providing services and to consolidate if program effectiveness and efficiency would be promoted. Strong support of regional approaches to solving regional problems.

**Support of an audible roll call by all governmental bodies for each decision.**

### **STANDARDS:**

When considering proposals for change, the effectiveness of the existing structure should be evaluated first.

Any proposal should support the general welfare of the people. It should be flexible in scope and authority to adjust to future growth and development patterns and flexible in determining the level of services according to the demands of the people. The desired services should be provided effectively.

The proposal should not unduly complicate governmental structures or generate collateral problems. It should fix responsibility for the performance of specific functions.

The proposal should be financially feasible, while, at the same time, distributing the tax burdens equitably among all taxpayers. There should be adequate financial resources to ensure economy and efficiency.

There should be ample provision for the initiation, administration, and enforcement of laws or ordinances necessary to carry out the wishes of the people.

#### For Incorporation Proposals:

Incorporation should improve the level of existing services, and/or provide new ones at an equitable cost for all taxpayers. There should be a reasonable tax base and/or a strong potential for growth in the tax base.

#### For Annexation Proposals:

Annexation should be for the common welfare and prosperity of both the annexing city and the area to be annexed. The terms should be fair and just. Consideration should be given to the natural, geographical, economic and social characteristics of the annexed area and the annexing city. The lines of the annexation should be drawn to form a compact area abutting the municipality.

The city should be financially able to provide municipal services to the annexed area in a reasonable time period. Extension of water and sewer lines should be available and feasible from an engineering standpoint.

## GOVERNMENT GOVERNMENTAL SOLUTIONS

### HISTORY:

Study: In 1953, the League of Women Voters of Jefferson County became the first county League in the United States. At that time most of the county was unincorporated, and the function of the county government was a major concern for the new League. The League has continued to remain an active player in the oversight of all governmental units in the county. It has analyzed state constitutional and statutory provisions for county government, considered possibilities for regional solutions, evaluated local governmental practices and studied incorporation proposals. These separate studies were consolidated into the current position in 1979. In 1980, the membership agreed that these positions were also applicable to the budget process. The study "Financing County Government and Services--1998-1999" focused on the budget and the limitations created by the passage of the Gallagher and TABOR amendments. An attempt was made to determine the fairness of the distribution of revenues for services to large unincorporated urban areas in the County. However, the issues are complicated and data open to interpretation.

In 2006, the League did a brief survey of several elected boards in Jefferson County.

Action: League supported incorporation of Lakewood and Wheat Ridge in 1969 and their subsequent successful efforts to become home rule cities (Lakewood: 1972, 1973, 1982, 1983 and Wheat Ridge: 1977).

In other action, the League supported the formation of the Law Enforcement Authority in unincorporated areas in 1969, the consolidation of water and sewer districts in Lakewood in 1973 and 1974, and, in 1979, the unsuccessful effort to pass a 1/2 per cent sales tax to build a justice complex.

Based upon the concept of representativeness and the state position on reapportionment, the League opposed lines drawn for the County Commissioner districts in 1982 following the 1980 census. Subsequent revision of district lines incorporated several of the League's suggestions. In 1993 a statement to the Lakewood City Council addressed the redrawing of the ward boundaries for city council members.

In 1987 the League supported an unsuccessful attempt to form a Lakewood City Fire Department based upon the League of Women Voters of Colorado's position on special districts. In 1993 the League supported the consolidation of the Lakewood and Bancroft Fire Protection districts. The proposal was defeated.

League opposed the annexation and development of the Chatfield Green area in Jefferson County by the city of Littleton in 1991. The proposal was approved. In 1993 the League urged the Open Space Advisory Committee to take a field trip to the "Chatfield Green" area.

In 1998, League supported an Urban Renewal Authority for Lakewood. The proposal passed.

The League supported an increase in the Lakewood sales tax in 2005.

## GOVERNMENT BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

### POSITION IN BRIEF:

Support of structures, procedures, and practices for elected and appointed boards and commissions which ensure accountability, representativeness, decision-making capability, effective performance, and openness.

### STANDARDS:

Accountability: Boards and commissions should be responsible to citizens and should hold their own leaders, committees, and members responsible for their actions and decisions.

The appointing boards should:

- review and evaluate the performance, composition, attendance records, and budgets of the appointed boards.
- develop general attendance guidelines.
- meet with each appointed board at least once a year.
- maintain a current list of appointed board members.

Members of the appointing boards should attend meetings of the appointed boards of which they are members.

Appointed boards may adopt additional attendance guidelines.

Representativeness: Members of boards and commissions represent the county/city as a whole as well as their own areas.

Reappointments to a board should not be automatic; performance and attendance should be evaluated.

When vacancies occur on a board there should be:

- an explicit system of filling vacancies that provides for a mix of members who represent the community and its geographical area.
- specific information (job description, qualifications, function of the board, instructions as to the form of the application) published in local newspapers.
- adequate time allowed for applications to be made.
- assurance by the appointing board that consideration will be given to all applications,
- and that vacancies will be filled promptly.

Decision-making capability: Boards and commissions should possess the knowledge, resources, and power to make decisions that meet the needs of citizens and reconcile conflicting interests and priorities. Boards should:

- utilize information provided by staff.
- record why they choose to go against staff recommendations .
- put reasons for the decisions in the minutes.
- require a confidential statement of business involvement by board members.

A board member with a conflict of interest should declare this conflict and abstain on the point of conflict.

## **GOVERNMENT BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

Effective Performance: Boards and commissions should function in an efficient manner with a minimum of conflict, wasted time and duplication of effort.

Boards should have:

- a clearly defined purpose with procedures to insure its achievement.
- staggered terms with limited number of successive terms allowed.
- proper orientation.

Participation of citizen advisory groups should be encouraged.

Open Government: Boards and commissions proceedings should be open to the fullest extent possible.

Citizen participation should be assured by public notification of meetings, availability of the procedures for participation, and dissemination of information regarding the board and its activities.

Governing bodies should communicate among themselves and with appointed boards.

### **HISTORY:**

Study: The League first studied the appointed boards and commissions in Jefferson County in 1974. Among the boards examined were county and municipal planning commissions, the Open Space Advisory Committee, and the County Health Board. These positions were reevaluated in 1987 and extended to include elected boards.

Action: The League has used these positions in letters to the county commissioners in support of open government and the public's right to know. (1984, 1987, and 1988).

In 2000, we supported Shiloh House, a residential treatment facility for abused and neglected children. League spoke before the Planning and Zoning Commission and attended the meeting where the commissioners voted against allowing Shiloh House to continue to house more than one youthful sex offender per home in residential areas.

## GOVERNMENT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

### POSITION IN BRIEF:

Support for increasing the number of county commissioners from three to five members.

### STANDARDS:

The Board of County Commissioners should be a policy-making board only, comprised of a minimum of five members elected for staggered terms of four years.

The Chairman of the Board should be elected by the Board.

Sensitivity to the financial implications of increasing the number of commissioners and to the desirability of having an appropriate balance of representation between rural and urban areas is important.

All other county officials, including a county manager, should be appointed. There should be job qualifications for these positions.

The county government should have the power to control annexations which affect its boundaries and to consolidate special districts.

### HISTORY:

Study: In a local study in 1956, the League consensus included a call for a state constitutional amendment permitting counties to have home rule. Such an amendment passed in 1970, and the League endorsed the concept for Jefferson County in 1972. In 2004, the League voted not to retain its position on county home rule.

After a restudy of the League position in 1991, the League supported the election of five county commissioners to be elected by district.

In 2006 the local membership urged a restudy of county government. The resulting consensus supported the concept of increasing the number of county commissioners from three to five. There was no clear consensus on how commissioners should be elected.

Action: The Jefferson County League was instrumental in the adoption of a study of local government by the League of Women Voters of Colorado in 1959. As a result of the state study, the League helped place a constitutional amendment permitting county home rule on the 1970 general election ballot.

At its annual meeting in 1975, the membership supported an effort to increase the number of county commissioners from three to five with three members being elected from districts and two elected at-large.

A 1976 ballot proposal, developed by a citizens' committee and approved by the county commissioners, to elect five county commissioners at-large was supported by the League. The proposal was defeated.

## GOVERNMENT LIBRARY

### POSITION IN BRIEF:

Support of the property tax as the primary means of financing the Jefferson County Public Library. Grants and donations are also appropriate sources of funding.

### STANDARDS:

A county library system should have high levels of materials and services.

Cooperation and coordination with public schools is desirable.

Important to the system, but not to be used as substitutes for adequate funding, are user fees for specialized services only, book sales, and the use of volunteers.

### HISTORY:

Study: In 1984, after many cuts in materials and services, it became evident the Jefferson County Public Library Board would ask the County Commissioners to place a proposal for an increased mill levy for libraries on the ballot. Jefferson County League members felt a study should be done so that League could take a position on any proposal. Consensus was reached in March 1986.

Action: The League supported an increase in the mill levy for Jefferson County Public Libraries in 1986, which passed.

In 2007, the League urged the County Commissioners to change the governance of the Jefferson County library system from a county library district to a separate library district. The League considered the fiscal implications to the new district and to the county. A new district was not created, and the Jefferson County Library remains a county library.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES LAND USE**

### **POSITION IN BRIEF:**

Support for an integrated, total county approach to planning which provides for the diverse needs of the members of the community while ensuring environmental quality. Support of county-wide wildfire mitigation efforts. (See environmental hazards)

Because of the unique qualities of the front range and the value of this area to the public in general, no development should be allowed unless consideration has been given to the aesthetics and to the preservation of the natural qualities of the land.

### **STANDARDS FOR THE PLANNING PROCESS:**

An adequate professional planning staff, whose comments and recommendations are read into the legal record at the hearing, should be provided.

A uniform building code, based on performance standards that would permit use of new materials once their quality and safety have been proven, should be used.

Land use should be modified or regulated (i.e., slash removal, floodplain zoning, county-wide wildfire mitigation) to ensure the safety of the inhabitants and to protect the environment. Prospective purchasers should be notified of the problems and hazards connected with the land.

Controls should be established for the Planned Development category.

Zoning resolutions and maps should be updated periodically based on the comprehensive plan.

Regulatory powers should be limited to the planning commission and/or the local governmental unit. Powers of the Board of Adjustment should be limited to variances of accepted uses in the Zoning Resolution.

Understandable terminology should be used.

Newspapers, websites and blogs should be encouraged to publish planning and zoning information.

Hearings should be scheduled at a time convenient to the greatest number of people.

## NATURAL RESOURCES LAND USE

### STANDARDS FOR LAND USE DECISIONS:

The Comprehensive Plan should be followed unless there is a change in conditions or a fault or weakness in the plan.

- The Plan should be specific as to land use and should reflect good planning rather than existing zoning and uses.
- Provisions should be made for continuous evaluation and updating.

The intent of the zoning resolution should be fulfilled. Subdivision regulations, building and housing codes should be met.

There should be coordination with state, regional and other local entities' plans.

The impact of the development on the environment, including, but not limited to, the following, should be considered:

- The density of development should be in accord with the natural determinants of the land.
- An optimum mountain-area population should be established based on the carrying capacity of the land and the community's ability to support it. A low overall density with some use of cluster development is appropriate for the mountains.

The surrounding land use and the effect on the entire community should be considered.

Governmental units should require proof of basic services when approving a new development. When applicable, the developer should be required to post a bond or its equivalent, to adequately ensure performance.

The neighborhood principle and sense of community should be enhanced.

Provision should be made for community and neighborhood commercial centers, civic and cultural centers, industrial parks, and transportation corridors.

Strip zoning should be discouraged. Service roads should be provided to limit access onto major thoroughfares. Provisions should be made for off-street parking.

Governmental units should provide for the acquisition, administration and maintenance of public lands including parks, open space, and schools. To ensure availability of lands for public use, governmental units could use the following methods: special zoning, tax relief, purchasing open land with tax funds, and/or requiring developers to dedicate land or money.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES LAND USE**

### **STANDARDS FOR LAND USE DECISIONS: (continued)**

The following purposes and functions of Open Space Parklands are supported:

- To preserve natural areas which are characterized by unusual terrain or geological formations, unusual or native flora or fauna, scenic areas or vistas, wildlife habitats, fragile ecosystems, or water resources.
- To preserve open space for passive recreational uses such as walking, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, nature studies and fishing (if so designated).
- To preserve areas for agricultural uses.
- To preserve open space lands for future recreational needs.
- To utilize open space lands for shaping the development of cities, limiting urban sprawl, and disciplining growth.
- To prevent encroachment on hazardous areas such as flood plains, swelling clay, fire chutes, landslides, etc.
- To retain the aesthetic value of open land.
- To obtain balance and harmony between open space and development for the use and benefit of the public.
- To preserve historic monuments.

The following purposes and function of developed parkland and recreational facilities are supported:

- To preserve parklands for recreational uses.
- To provide recreational opportunities for a wide range of age and interest groups.
- To provide neighborhood recreational areas and community gathering places.
- To foster innovative community design which enhances the urban landscape.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES LAND USE**

### **HISTORY:**

Study: The first venture of the Jeffco League into the area of land use was in 1959. A 1966 study resulted in goals and standards for planning and zoning. Criteria for mountain land use were adopted after a 1972 study. Members reviewed and consolidated all land use positions in 1973. A land use unit in 1979 centered on citizen impact and involvement in land use decisions. Members were updated on Jefferson County Land Use Planning in 1984. Several 1990's unit meetings covered land use, growth and natural resources (including wetlands) topics. The zoning process was reviewed in 1997. Committee members attended watershed and mountain water meetings.

A study of parks and recreation in Jefferson County in 1964 resulted in standards for parks and open space. Purposes and functions of parks and open space were adopted in 1977 as part of a study of the Open Space Program (see Open Space position).

In 2007 a Jeffco concurrence supported county-wide wildfire mitigation efforts to the Land Use and Environmental Hazards positions. League urges the implementation of various measures designed to protect our most critical areas (watershed, areas with historic significance, and areas important to industry and the local economy) from catastrophic wildfire.

Action: The Jeffco League supported the successful passage, in 1968, of bond issues for both North and South Jeffco Metropolitan Recreation and Park Districts. In 1969, the League supported development of bridle paths in South Jeffco, the Lakewood Student Park Project, and sponsored a go-see environmental tour.

The League worked with PLAN Jeffco in 1972 for passage of a ½ percent sales tax in the county for the purchase and preservation of open space. The idea was initiated by Leaguer Carol Karlin.

In 1973, the League supported adoption of the Golden Ralston Comprehensive Plan and the Lakewood Comprehensive Plan. The League urged adoption of more restrictive flood hazard regulations, and the purchase of open space. Concern was expressed about several rezoning cases.

Beginning in 1978, land use positions were used to address mining operations. The League opposed operations on South Table Mountain, North Table Mountain, Clear Creek Canyon, and Deer Creek Canyon (Rattlesnake Gulch), and supported a Chatfield Bluffs project. A letter was written to the County Commissioners regarding the Cooley Gravel Mining in Clear Creek Canyon in 1982. League representatives served on a Gravel Ad Hoc Committee in 1973 and the Aggregate Resources Roundtable in 1986.

A Genesee annexation rezoning was opposed in 1979. The League supported Golden's purchase of rights-of-way for open space and/or parks in 1981. A housing development in Chimney Creek, off 1-70, was opposed in 1982. The proposal passed. The League also commented on Arvada's Master Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space in 1982.

A League representative served on the Southeast Land Use Plan Advisory Committee in 1984-85. The complete plan was reviewed and comments made. The Southeast Plan was used to support our statement in 1986 regarding the development of the Grant Properties. The League was represented on the Coalition for Evergreen in 1987. A statement was also presented before the Golden Planning Commission in 1987. The North Plains Community Policy Plan was critiqued in 1988.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES LAND USE**

### **HISTORY:** (continued)

In 1987, the League joined a lawsuit against the County Commissioners and the Bear Creek Development Corporation seeking to stop construction of a radio tower on Mt. Morrison. The lawsuit was dismissed "with prejudice". The tower stands, but was erected with less visual impact than originally planned.

League made comments on the Clear Creek/I-76 Joint Planning Project in the Arvada area in 1990.

Lakewood action included:

- Support of the Lakewood 1982-85 Capital Improvement Program as it related to land use and parks in 1982, and suggested amendments to the Park Element of Concept Lakewood, which was adopted in 1984.
- Support of a Lakewood Park Dedication Ordinance in 1983, cautioning against granting waivers to the park dedication requirements in 1984, and support of a park improvement fee for non-residential development in 1988..
- A League representative served on the Lakewood Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group in 1986. The League reviewed and supported the Lakewood Comprehensive Plan in 1987.
- Support in 1990 of the reclassification of 13th. Ave. to "transit corridor".
- Spoke in 1991 to Lakewood Planning Commission in support of Department of Community Resources' Comprehensive: Master Plan and Related Lakewood Comprehensive Plan Amendments.

In 2003 the League wrote a letter in support of the west corridor Regional Transportation project.

In 2005 the president wrote a letter to the Colorado Department of Transportation regarding the I-70 Mountain Corridor Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement in support of a balanced multi-modal transportation system that preserved Colorado's natural beauty with minimal additional land use and disruption to the land.

In 2007 League wrote a letter to the Open Space Advisory Committee and to the County Commissioners in opposition of the petition to construct a water tank and pump station on Jefferson County Open Space near the mouth of Coal Creek Canyon citing League positions regarding conservation and wise management of resources and reiterating that growth should not take place faster than services and infrastructure can be provided.

## NATURAL RESOURCES OPEN SPACE

### POSITION IN BRIEF:

**Support for a county-wide Open Space Program funded by a sales tax. Support of procedures and criteria for the use of Open Space funds for development.**

### STANDARDS:

The first priority for the use of open space funds should be the acquisition of open space land: greenbelt, water resources including drainage areas, the mountain front, small plots in urban areas and mountain areas. Specific examples include: North and South Table Mountains, the Hogback, Green Mountain and the Crown Hill area. Maintenance is the second priority, followed by development and then the establishment of a Reserve Fund.

The allocation formula should be based on the concept of a county-wide program which allows for flexibility in meeting urgent demands and acquisition needs in any area of the county, and reflects the fact that most of the land available is in the unincorporated area. The 1972 Resolution meets this standard.

The originally adopted role of park and recreation districts within the open space program should be continued.

There should be a mechanism for periodic review of the open space resolution every two to six years (e.g., public hearings, review by the County Commissioners, Jefferson County Open Space Advisory Committee or an ad hoc committee).

Unincorporated Jefferson County Open Space fund expenditures for the development and maintenance of capital recreational improvements should be reviewed by the Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) or a subcommittee of OSAC. The review procedures should meet League's standards (see Boards and Commissions position).

Development should be compatible with the concept of open space and meet adopted criteria.

- Open Space funds may be used for: protective development as permitted in the 1972 resolution; native plantings; trails; camping; sodded playgrounds; fields for soccer and softball; courts for games such as tennis; water-related developments for fishing, boating and beaches; nature centers; cross-country skiing, amphitheaters, outdoor ice skating areas and horse arenas such as at Crown Hill.
- Open Space funds should not be used for developments, which include: athletic complexes, zoos, cultural centers, swimming pools, museums, bowling alleys, libraries, fairgrounds, motorcycle parks, gun ranges and lights for courts and fields. Other sources of funding are available and should be used for these developments.

## NATURAL RESOURCES OPEN SPACE

### STANDARDS: (continued)

The following criteria should be used in allocating open space funds for the development and maintenance of park and recreational capital improvements:

#### Of Primary Importance

- An appropriate agency should review the request and make recommendations.
- Acquisition needs for the area's population should be met.
- Development should be appropriate for the site.
- Future maintenance costs to the Open Space Program should be considered and minimized, with the appropriate entities assuming these costs.
- Funding alternatives should be considered.
- Citizen input on the type and scope of development should be ensured.
- The impact of the development on the overall program should be considered (e.g., effects on acquisition, maintenance, trail development, joint ventures).
- The project should be part of a long-range development plan.
- Development should be balanced by natural open space land in the local area.
- There should be a need for recreational development in the area.

#### Of Secondary Importance

- The amount already spent in the area for acquisition and development should be considered.
- Facility development standards should be considered.

### HISTORY:

Study: With the study "Open Space and Recreation" in 1977, League members reviewed the Open Space Program they helped establish in 1972 and adopted guidelines and priorities for the program. After the 1982 amendment of the 1972 Resolution to allow for capital recreation improvements, "Jeffco Open Space 1972-1984" was published and members adopted procedures and criteria for evaluating development proposals. Additional Open Space updates were prepared in 1998 and 1999.

Action: In 1972, the League supported the establishment of the Open Space Program. (see Land Use)

In 1978 and 1980, the League opposed various amendments to change the allocation formula to use open space funds for development and to divert one-half of the open space revenues for a county jail. The amendment to allow funds to be used for development was passed.

In 1980, the League supported the use of funds for acquisition of open space land in Golden.

In 1986, a League representative was appointed to the Open Space Ad Hoc Committee. The League also made comments on: Lakewood's Belmar request, the process used for the acquisition of the Jefferson County Center Park (County Government Complex), and the Evergreen Center for the Arts proposal.

The Ad Hoc Committee recommendations were supported in 1987. The issue of adequate funding for security and maintenance was addressed in comments on the 1988 and 1989 budgets. The budget process was questioned.

## NATURAL RESOURCES OPEN SPACE

### HISTORY: (continued)

In 1988 the League reviewed and commented on the Open Space Master Plan Draft, supported the purchase of 134 acres on Green Mountain, sponsored a tour of Jeffco Open Space for participants of the LWVUS Convention, and commented on the appointment process for OSAC members. (Jeffco LWV Boards and Commissions' positions were used.)

In 1989 the League supported the adoption of the Master Plan and an aggressive acquisition program, opposed a Hogback land trade for the Bandimere Speedway, joined the Coalition for Open Space and met with the County Commissioners regarding process and acquisition, commented on the operation of the Open Space program for a Management Audit Report, supported Hiwan staffing and programming, and supported the Lookout Mountain location for a Nature Center.

Letters were sent in 1990 advancing most of League's positions in regard to the budget process. Also in 1990 in commenting on the Standley Lake Conceptual Plan, the League supported a park designed to encourage low-intensity activities and focusing on the natural aspects of the area. In 1991, the League supported: approval of the budget, a procedural change which provided for public comment prior to the formal budget adoption hearing and a Lakewood/Open Space joint venture development of the Fox Hollow Golf Course rather than a loan or the outright grant that was approved. Also in 1991, League opposed the swap of 400 acres on North Table Mountain for 100 acres of the Open Space Matthews Winter Park, as proposed by Western Mobile. It was defeated. A letter was sent to the Jefferson County Board of Adjustment to deny a request by Bandimere Speedway for a sign larger than the code allows to be placed near Open Space lands.

In 1992 League generally supported the proposed 1993 Open Space budget but said \$35,000 for the fairgrounds should be eliminated. It was kept in. League also supported the preservation of the 876 acre Dakota Hogback parcel bounded by C-470, Ken Caryl Road, Deer Creek Canyon, and the base of Lyons Hogback.

League recommended, in 1993, the adoption of proposed changes to the Zoning Resolution which clarified circumstances under which land presently designated "open space" in the Planned Development Zone District may be re-zoned and which established permitted uses and standards for such Open Space zoned land. The same year League opposed a land trade with Bandimere. (Approved) In 1994 support was given for the preservation of Clear Creek Canyon and the Mountain Area Land Trust's proposal for preservation of land adjacent to Elk Meadow. Extensive comments were made regarding the update of the Open Space Master Plan in 1995. A Great Outdoors Colorado grant for a Mountain Backdrop study was supported in 1997. In 1998 several letters were sent opposing a possible Nike complex on South Table Mountain and urging its preservation. Nike withdrew the proposal. League supported the 1999 campaign to use bonds for the acquisition of Open Space priorities.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS**

### **POSITION IN BRIEF:**

**Support of measures which would provide residents with notification of hazards, safety measures, and warning systems related to manmade or natural hazards such as dams, dumps, landfills, wildfires, storage and transportation of hazardous materials and radioactivity associated with mines, water and the Rocky Flats Nuclear Facility.**

### **STANDARDS:**

Notification of any hazard should pass from owner to prospective buyer prior to the sale of any property.

Detailed evacuation plans and/or emergency procedures prepared by an appropriate government agency should accompany, where applicable, re-zoning applications for areas proximate to an identified hazard. The plans should be made known to persons residing within the area of concern, as defined by pertinent government agencies. Such agencies (e.g., the Office of Emergency Preparedness) must have adequate funding to help coordinate evacuation plans and/or emergency procedures within the county.

Where needed, sufficient and fully functioning warning systems should be installed in the vicinity of identified environmental hazards (e.g., posted signs near abandoned mines or siren systems). There should be regular safety inspections of both warning systems and the identified hazards.

A complete analysis of the water, including a test for radioactivity, should be required of all new wells.

State and statutory aid should be provided to bolster local wildfire mitigation efforts. The risks to the Jefferson County economy and environment as well as to the state as a whole are grave enough to warrant this assistance. Local government should make land use decisions that protect our resources and preserve our quality of life.

### **HISTORY:**

Study: The 1980 study defined what the League would like to have happen in Jefferson County in response and prevention of environmental hazards while recognizing that most of the prerogatives for legislation belong to the state legislature. The study included material on water pollution, the Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) and a description of the facilities of metro hospitals able to treat victims of a nuclear disaster. An update in 1986 included information on an application for an incineration permit by Rocky Flats, solid waste, and hazards associated with radon gas.

Funded by an 1995 Department of Energy \$9000 grant, by way of the LWVUS Education Fund, the Jeffco League prepared a booklet and video on Rocky Flats providing information on waste storage issues and on how citizens could become involved in the decision making process. The video and prepared programs were used by many groups.

In 2008, the Jeffco League reviewed the challenges and methods of wildfire mitigation, and concluded that risks to the county's economy and environment were great enough to require state and statutory aid to bolster local wildfire mitigation efforts. Residents should be notified of possible wildfire hazards in and around their property.

In 2009, the Jeffco League had an update on Rocky Flats focusing on the perspectives on closure, cleanup, remediation and future directions for the property. The League considered the proposal to use as a wildlife refuge.

Action: The League's positions were presented to a subcommittee of the Rocky Flats Monitoring Committee in 1981. League supported continuing the hazard warnings on FHA loans for homes near Rocky Flats.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS**

### **HISTORY** (continued):

In 1989 and 1990, LWV Education Fund donations and comments of support were made to the County Commissioners for the Household Chemical Roundup. Also in 1990, League supported an increased fee at solid waste facilities in Jefferson County to finance environmental programs such as the Chemical Roundup.

In 2004 the League wrote a letter of concern encouraging public comment and the allowance of time for interested parties to speak about their ideas and concerns regarding the Rocky Flats Clean-up Project and the eventual creation of a wildlife refuge. The League urged that the public be kept informed about the process and the clean-up progress.

In 2005, the local League became involved with the Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments and share the responsibilities with the League of Women Voters of Colorado.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES NOISE POLLUTION**

### **POSITION IN BRIEF:**

**Support for implementation of noise standards by local governments with adequate funding for enforcement.**

### **STANDARDS:**

Noise control standards should be adopted by all levels of government, but particularly at city and county levels. Enforcement should be concentrated at the local level.

Planning and zoning at all levels of government (with local emphasis) should be used to control noise.

Consumer pressure, such as through consumer groups for quieter products, should be encouraged.

Education of the public about the hazards that noise pollution poses to public health and welfare should be a function of local governments and law enforcement agencies, the health department, noise control personnel, and the public schools. The media and PTA's should be involved in this process.

### **HISTORY:**

Study: Because the League considered noise to be a sufficient hazard to public health and welfare, a noise control study in 1977 resulted in a general environmental statement and standards to apply to planning and zoning. As a result of the Jeffco study, a LWVCO position on noise was approved.

Action: The League supported continued funding for a noise control officer in Lakewood in 1978 and the reinstatement of noise control in the Lakewood budget in 1979. Both were denied.

## NATURAL RESOURCES: SUSTAINABILITY

### POSITION IN BRIEF:

**Support for a way of life which seeks to balance environmental, economic, and human needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet the same goal.**

**STANDARDS:** Sustainability encompasses individual households, neighborhoods, local towns and cities, states, and nations. It includes environmental and economic concerns, and human needs.

**HISTORY:** Interest in the concept of sustainability surfaced within the Jeffco LWV early in 2008. That fall League members toured the single stream recycling plant operated by Waste Management in north Denver.

The committee researching the information became known as the Sustainability Committee because as the members studied the topic it became obvious that sustainability is the key to the future of our communities. The committee studied opportunities available within the county for individuals as well as businesses to follow more sustainable practices. Slowly, it became apparent that the concept of sustainability was inherent in many of our LWV positions at the local, state, and national levels.

The concept of sustainability had grown slowly, starting with recycling and energy efficiency. A member survey attempted to illustrate ways in which small life style changes can allow us to make a positive impact on our communities

In December 2008 at the Legislative Breakfast the members voted to study and come to a consensus regarding the concept of sustainability.

In spring 2009 we developed a definition of Sustainability, reviewed established positions that supported our definition, reported on municipalities' participation in sustainable practices, collated and reviewed the Personal Behavior Survey of members, and presented national, state, local and general "interesting ideas". We shared our work with other leagues.

The League of Women Voters of Colorado formed a committee to study the issue. In 2010, they adopted our definition of Sustainability as a Principle.

In 2009 we researched jobs in Green industry in the county, the development of St Anthony's, the Jefferson Parkway, Rooney Valley development, Lakewood Zoning and the County Commissioners. The Jefferson County Master Plan was not complete at that time but we did learn that it was in the planning stages. Golden was planning to hire a sustainability coordinator. Some municipalities seemed to have been thinking about sustainability, but it was difficult to find much information on what they were planning. During our research we found some areas that had the potential for making a big environmental impact. Was sustainability being considered? Were the social and economic interests of the citizens being taken into account?

When these ideas were presented to the membership, the committee was directed to focus on the proposed privately-funded Jefferson Parkway toll road in the northern part of the county, and the proposed commercial development of the Rooney Valley.

In November 2010 a National Call to Action on Climate Change was made. From that call the committee developed commitments to write a monthly information article to be shared with community and to develop a Speakers Bureau.

In February of 2011, we applied for a grant from the League of Women Voters of Colorado. We received \$1,500 to be used for the development of a Sustainability Speakers Bureau.

At the unit meetings in April of 2011, members discussed the latest developments at Dinosaur Ridge and in the continuing battles over the Jefferson Public Parkway Highway Authority.

Action: The following letters were sent:

- U.S. Department of the Interior and Senators Mark Udall and Michael Bennet requesting that a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement be required before the Wildlife Refuge easement is granted.
- In 2009 to the Jefferson County Planning and Zoning Commission and to the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners urging that revisions to the Master Plan grant approval to development that recognizes the interdependence of social, economic and environmental impacts.
- City of Lakewood in February 2010 during the city's zoning ordinance review to encourage the inclusion of the League's concept of sustainability in revisions to the city's Zoning Ordinance.

A guest commentary appeared in the online edition of The Denver Post in May of 2010 expressing concerns about the Jefferson Parkway, including an easement through a section of the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge, the potential for a non-compete clause in a contract with a private developer, and the need for more public transparency upon the part of Parkway backers.

**SOCIAL POLICY  
EDUCATION: ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE**

**POSITION IN BRIEF:**

**Support of policies which promote efficient administrative and financial practice in the Jefferson County School District.**

**STANDARDS:**

The distribution of building funds throughout the county should be made on the basis of need as determined by population growth and equality of educational opportunity.

Transportation should be furnished at school expense to students living outside the mileage limitation. Mileage limitations and bus loading regulations should be strictly enforced.

There should be open communication within the school system and with the public to stimulate an understanding of the factors which affect quality of education.

The structures and functions of the Citizen Advisory Committees should be clearly defined. Their activities and work should be publicized in order to increase community awareness.

The budget's format should be understandable to citizens. Citizen participation through advisory committees in the budget development process should continue.

Public workshops and hearings should be held early in the budget process to provide information which would allow citizens to knowledgeably participate in the budget development process and to offer recommendations.

**SOCIAL POLICY  
QUALITY EDUCATION**

**POSITION IN BRIEF:**

**Support of a budget that provides high quality education for all students regardless of course selection.**

**STANDARDS:**

The areas of math, science, and language arts are essential to quality education.

Curriculum areas to be strongly supported are business, literature, foreign language, social studies, vocational education, art, music, and physical education. Curriculum for special needs children such as gifted and talented, learning disabled, special education, handicapped, and English as a second language should also be strongly supported.

Other areas to be strongly supported are competitive teachers' salaries, incentives for upgrading (e.g., career ladders, master teacher concept, pertinent educational opportunities), class size (age and subject appropriate) and libraries.

Home economics, speech, drama and forensics are less important.

Athletics should be at least partially fee supported.

**SOCIAL POLICY  
QUALITY EDUCATION**

**HISTORY:**

Study: The League has been active in educational issues since the first formulation of the position on administration and financial structure in 1954. Further study in 1961 led to the standards for building and servicing schools. A study of the budget in 1968 did not lead to additional positions, but the 1975 study resulted in standards on communication and finance.

The League was not able to speak to budget issues concerning curriculum until 1984, when positions relating to curriculum and teacher incentives were developed.

Members received education updates in 1992, 1994, 1995, 1997 and met with School Board members and staff in February 2000.

The League studied option and charter schools in 2002 and published *A Whole Lot of Choices: A Look at Jefferson County's Option and Charter Schools*. An update was published in 2007 discussing the new charter schools, option schools, and special programs housed in neighborhood schools.

Action: The League has been active in bond issue elections. The League supported bond issues that passed in 1955, 1960, 1962, 1971, and 1979 that failed in 1976 and 1989. In 1992, League supported both parts of a bond issue and only Part One passed. League supported a successful 1997 school bond issue. The League took no position on bond issues in 1958, 1966 and 1974.

In 1987, 1989 and 1990 the League supported mill levy increases which did not pass. No position was taken on the failed 1998 mill levy increase. League supported a successful 1999 mill levy increase.

A letter of recommendation concerning the search for a new superintendent and the vision of the Jefferson County Schools was sent in 1990. In 1993, League supported Even Start's efforts to renew federal funding for the Links to Literacy Even Start Family Literacy Program in Jefferson County.

In 1995 the R-I Board of Education was asked to move the lobbyist's report to an earlier time in their meeting's agenda.

The League supported the mill levy override in 2000. In 2003, the League supported a mill levy increase and a bond proposal for Jefferson County schools.

The League membership met with the Board of Education in 2000, 2002, 2005, and 2007.

The League supported a mill levy and bond proposal in 2004 and 2005. In 2008, the League supported an increase in the mill levy to support operations and a bond issue for construction.

## SOCIAL POLICY HOUSING

### POSITION IN BRIEF:

Support of provisions for well-planned diversified types and densities of housing, dispersed low-income housing as an integral part of the community, high-rise developments as one alternative for low and moderate income housing for the elderly, and mobile homes in landscaped and regulated settings with adequate open space.

Support of shelters and transitional housing in Jefferson County as emergency and short term housing measures with emphasis on assisting people to become self-sufficient. Shelters and transitional housing should address LWWUS criteria.

### STANDARDS:

High-rise developments for the elderly should be:

- located close to public transportation, grocery stores, medical services, and dining facilities.
- located within access by public transportation to other shops and services.
- planned to provide some adjacent open, green space near the building as well as access to public parks.

Building design should provide:

- ease of living and safety including adequate storage, lighting, laundry facilities and fire safety.
- tenant "living space" within the building which includes apartment units, small and large meeting rooms and recreational facilities.
- special consideration for physical disabilities, such as elevators and doorways wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs, gurneys and some units with low counters and appropriately sized appliances.

Other features which improve the livability and increase the desirability of high-rise developments include:

- availability of social services to tenants (e.g., tenant organizations, resident manager or program director, social worker, counselor).
- opportunities for extended educational cultural and recreational experiences.

### HISTORY:

Study: Using the LWWUS position on equal opportunity in housing as a basis, the Jeffco League, in 1969, began its first study of housing in the county. A 1970 consensus developed positions on diversification of and densities in new housing projects.

The League prepared slide shows in 1971 and 1974 and conducted tours in 1973 and 1974 documenting the need for low/moderate-income housing in the county. The slide presentation was used both as part of the two studies and to stimulate community awareness of the need for implementation of fair housing.

In 1975, the booklet, HOUSING FOR ALL: HOW? (first printed in 1974), was distributed throughout the county. The research for this booklet led to consensus on conditions for quality in high-rise structures for the elderly.

The 1990 study reviewed state, county, and municipal public and private housing programs. The information was updated in 1997.

In 2009, the League looked at homelessness in Jefferson County. A survey and statistics gathered were shared with the membership and the County Commissioners.

## SOCIAL POLICY HOUSING

### **HISTORY:** (continued)

Action: League has been active in housing issues at the county and municipal levels. County action has included support for a Public Housing Authority and a Federal Rent Supplement Resolution, a prerequisite for the use of federal rent subsidies. Both failed in 1969. League supported the county adoption of the Metro Housing Allocation Plan in 1973 which failed. In 1974 it was passed by Arvada, Lakewood and Jefferson County.

The League initiated the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee for a Jefferson County Housing Authority in 1975. Ten League members served on the 10-week-long Housing Advisory Task Force which recommended the Authority. The League then supported it in formal hearings before the County Commissioners, and it passed.

In 1971 the League supported a successful Lakewood resolution to create a Lakewood Housing Task Force. The League supported housing proposals for the elderly in 1971 and 1973; and supported low-income housing in 1973. The re-zoning proposal for housing the elderly was delayed by court action and was not approved until 1977.

The League supported the creation of the Lakewood Housing Authority and use of Community Development Block Grants in 1975. In 1976, it supported the adoption of the Lakewood Housing Code which passed unanimously.

In Arvada, action in support of the Rent Supplement Resolution in 1969 was successful. The League supported the formation of the Interfaith Housing Task Force in 1971 and use of Community Development Block Grants in 1975. In 1975-76, the League supported re-zoning proposals to allow two housing developments for the elderly.

In 1975, the League supported Wheat Ridge's acceptance of the Metro Housing Allocation Plan which failed. Wheat Ridge, Golden, and Edgewater later contracted with Jefferson County Housing Authority in 1976 to administer their housing needs, thereby accepting the Allocation Plan. In the Golden area, League supported a mobile home park in 1977.

Housing concerns were addressed as part of statements on open space and planning and zoning in Lakewood in 1986 and 1989, and before the County Commissioners in 1986.

In 1993, League supported a Community Development Block Grant from the city of Lakewood to the Jeffco Action Center for a 30-bed homeless shelter. In 1994 League supported re-zoning for a Jeffco Action Center homeless shelter in Lakewood against bitter neighborhood opposition. The re-zoning was not granted. In 1998 a Lakewood rezoning for Habitat for Humanity was successfully supported. The Jeffco League then supplied lunch for Habitat workers that summer. In fall of 1999 Leaguers donated a workday to Habitat. Also in 1999, League supported a \$20,000 Jefferson County contribution for an overflow homeless shelter at Ft. Logan. It was approved.

## SOCIAL POLICY HEALTH CARE SERVICES

### POSITION IN BRIEF:

Support Jefferson County government leadership in developing health policy and in facilitating and coordinating delivery of physical and mental health care services for county residents. High priority is placed on preventive care, primary care and emergency care. Health services should be evaluated in terms of accountability, availability and equitable financing.

The LWVUS position states: *"The federal government should set minimums, uniform standards and bear the primary responsibility for financing. State and local governments, as well as the private sector, should have a secondary role in financing health care programs."* (04/88 Impact On Issues)

### STANDARDS:

Roles: Jefferson County should develop health policy, monitor compliance with health statutes and regulations, and facilitate and coordinate delivery of services for county residents. High priority should be given to preventive care (e.g., screenings, immunizations). The County should also assess the health needs of the community, provide health education, strengthen linkage with mental health agencies and provide resources for primary care for the needy. Duplication of services should be avoided by such methods as contracting with other agencies where feasible (e.g., Denver Health and Hospitals).

Jefferson Center for Mental Health should provide treatment for emotionally disturbed juveniles, the borderline mentally ill, the seriously mentally ill and emergency services. As resources permit, the Center should also provide leadership in coordinating services, working with other agencies, and sponsoring preventive community educational programs.

In addition to the programs mandated by statute, Jefferson County R-1 School District's prime role should be to provide health education, including information on substance abuse, sex education, and birth control, as well as nutritional programs (e.g., reduced and free hot lunches).

Early childhood programs are a high priority for promoting mental health. Following identification of a physical or mental health problem, referral for treatment should be made to the appropriate agency or private provider.

Lower priority is ascribed to non-mandated screenings (e.g., scoliosis), safety/suicide prevention programs, mental health counseling (other than identification of need and referral), educational programs for the emotionally disturbed (other than as mandated) and crisis intervention.

Extended day care programs for severely and chronically mentally ill children and adolescents should be provided by other agencies.

Private professional providers and agencies should participate in local physical and mental health programs as well as federal and state programs such as Medicaid and should offer pro bono services. They should cooperate with the County in coordinating the delivery of health services.

Nonprofit volunteer agencies, such as the Jeffco Action Center, should not be expected to provide primary health care services. They offer emergency and interim help in a crisis situation.

## SOCIAL POLICY HEALTH CARE SERVICES

### Criteria for Evaluating Health Care Programs

Programs for physical and mental health care should be characterized by accountability for appropriate and quality care, availability of services, and financial responsibility and equity.

#### Accountability:

- Non-professionals should be included on governing boards of agencies.
- Programs should target population at risk and be responsive to the needs of the people.
- The patient's right to confidentiality, to be informed about illness/treatment, and to forgo treatment should be respected.
- Agency should have criteria and procedures for evaluating its own programs (e.g., performance standards and professional peer review).

#### Availability:

- Services should be provided at convenient locations.
- Public transportation should be available.
- Relevant information on available programs should be disseminated to target populations.

#### Financial responsibility and equity:

- Fees should be based on ability to pay, and services free where necessary.
- Appropriate cost control measures should be instituted. Measures could include: physician participation in federal, state and local health programs; promoting prevention/primary care programs; expanding outpatient services; reducing wasteful practices and unnecessary regulations; using allied health professionals; prospective pricing budgeting; and limiting liability.
- Reasonable compensation for providers should be based on necessary and appropriate costs. This does not negate providers' obligation to offer pro bono services and participate in health programs. Participation should be universal to ensure the equitable distribution of complementary private activities.

### Prioritized Services:

For all ages the highest priority for health care services should include preventive care, primary care, emergency care, and prescriptions needed for treatment. Specifically, highest priority is also given to: nutrition and reconstructive surgery for infants and children; health and sex education (including family planning) for teens; maternal health care for teens and adults; acute care for chronic medical conditions (e.g., asthma, diabetes) for adults and the elderly; and home care and nursing home care for the elderly.

Moderate priority is given to: dental and vision care and prosthetic devices for all ages; catastrophic care for all but the elderly; nutrition; reconstructive care and rehabilitative therapy for teens, adults and elderly; substance abuse treatment for teens and adults; family planning, AIDS treatment and homecare for adults; and day care and respite care for the elderly.

A low priority is given to: heroic medical procedures, transplants, and experimental procedures for all ages; respite care for infants, children, teens, and adults; treatment of eating disorders for teens; and catastrophic care for the elderly.

The highest priority for mental health services for all ages should include preventive care, including early childhood programs, educational programs and counseling; outpatient treatment including assessment, evaluation, placement, counseling (individual, family, group); medications and emergency care; and short term hospital alternative facilities and residential care for the seriously mentally ill.

Lower priority should include community outreach programs; consultation and trauma management; vocational programs for persons with chronic mental illness; and programs such as day care (all ages), respite care, group boarding homes and nursing home care.

## SOCIAL POLICY HEALTH CARE SERVICES

### HISTORY:

Study: At the beginning of the health services study in 1987-89, members used case studies to review the resources in Jefferson County regarding health care; studied health services for prenatal care, teens, and family planning; and studied the Jeffco Health Department's Dependency Treatment Programs. In December 1989, the LWVUS Education Fund was used to publish Health Care Services in Jefferson County. Five hundred copies were distributed to members, officials, providers and interested citizens. Consensus was reached on priorities, roles, and criteria for physical and mental health care services.

A study of individual sewage disposal systems was undertaken in 1995.

In 2003 the League studied health care conditions, options and policies in Jefferson County. The study included the Children's Health Plan (CHP+).

In 2006-2007, the League looked at funding of Jefferson County Health Department.

Action: In 1990, the League supported Jefferson County Health Department's grant application for the Colorado Trust prenatal initiative. The Jefferson County Board of Health meetings were being observed.

During the winter of 1993-1994, a series of town meetings on health care reform was co-sponsored by the League and the Clear Creek Valley Medical Society.

In 1995, League commented on proposed Individual Sewage Disposal System (ISDS) regulations. In 1995 League also supported Citizens for Lakewood's Future request to the "Colorado Trust" for a grant to develop a "Healthy Communities Index".

In 1998, League unsuccessfully opposed a cut in funding for the Jefferson County Department of Health and Environment.

Local and national positions underlay action in 1997-2000 to monitor and facilitate the transition to "Temporary Assistance to Needy Families" (TANF). LWV Jeffco moderated a community roundtable and participated on the executive committee monitoring welfare reform and action.

In 2003, the League supported a mill levy to provide additional funding for organizations serving the developmentally disabled in Jefferson County.

In 2007, the League sponsored a Health Care Reform for Colorado Forum which discussed the reform proposed by the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Health Care. Representatives from the Blue Ribbon Commission on Health Care, from the Colorado Health Institute, and from Health Care for All Colorado served as panelists for the public meeting.