

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE BOZEMAN AREA  
CONDENSED POSITION STATEMENTS - April, 2015

PLANNING, GROWTH, AND LAND USE - History: "City planning, including zoning, traffic, and parking, and open streams and culverts" was studied prior to 1967 and adopted as current agenda through 1969. Growth and land use was studied in 1975 and a detailed position was adopted in May of that year. A general statement of position was adopted in 1977, and was carried as a continued responsibility each year after that. An active LWV land use committee studied and worked for a new Master Plan and for county-wide planning from March, 1982 until May, 1984. A revised position was not adopted at that time and it is recommended that we revise our 1975-1977 position to take into account changes that have taken place during the last 15 years.

Position (1977): The League of Women Voters of the Bozeman Area, recognizing that land is a finite resource, not just a commodity, believes that land ownership, whether public or private, implies responsibility of stewardship. We believe that growth is inevitable and that local government must accept responsibility for planning and managing land resources. It is essential that local government determine, regulate, and guide land use. Citizen participation must be built into the planning and management of land use to guarantee responsive and responsible governmental decisions. Strict adherence to a master plan and zoning code is imperative if our community is to achieve and maintain harmonious social and economic stability.

FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT - History: Gallatin County Government was studied from 1967 - 1969 and in informational booklet was published in 1971. Alternative forms of city and county government were studied from 1973 to 1977, and a position was adopted in 1977. This position was updated in 1986, 1998 and 1999.

Position (1998): City of Bozeman - The League of Women Voters of the Bozeman Area favors a commission-manager form of government for the City of Bozeman because its efficiency outweighs its questionable accountability and visibility. Further, when compared with cities of similar size, the commission-manager form appears to function relatively better than other forms of government. The League also supports: self-governing powers, preferably with the adoption of a charter with no specific limitations; at-large nomination and election of commissioners.

Gallatin County Government - The League of Women Voters of the Bozeman Area supports a charter form of government to establish self-government powers. The League supports either a commission manager form of government with five part-time commissioners, or a county commission form of government with five full-time commissioners. The League favors the election of commissioners who are nominated from districts and elected at-large to four overlapping terms in partisan elections.

Term Limits (2013)

The League of Women Voters of the Bozeman Area supports:

The removal of term limits for Montana legislators.

In the event that term limits continue the LWV of the Bozeman Area supports efforts to mitigate the adverse effects of term limits by lengthening current terms and/or providing additional training opportunities for legislators to prepare them for elective office.

Gallatin County Libraries - History: The Bozeman Public Library and its community services was studied in 1969 and 1970, and an informational leaflet was printed. The League studied Gallatin County Libraries from 1976 - 1979 and adopted a position supporting expanded facilities and county financial support. League members were active in gaining support for a bond issue for a new Bozeman Library and a mill levy for county financial support of libraries. The library position was restudied and an updated position adopted in 1989. It was recommended at that time that the library position be expanded at a time when the freeze on property taxes is lifted, and when this happens League may want to support making the Bozeman library into a county library that services the smaller county libraries.

PARKS AND RECREATION - History: A lengthy and detailed position on parks and recreation was adopted in 1967 and carried as a continuing responsibility until 1987, even though many parts of the position became obsolete. In 1988, the position was restudied and an updated position was adopted. A complete version of the position follows. In 1997 the position was reviewed and updated again as follows.

Position (1998) - The League of Women Voters of the Bozeman Area, believing that recreation is an essential public service, supports the following:

- Recreation programs and recreation facilities to meet the needs of all ages, groups, and recreational interests and designed to involve non-participants.
- Coordination and cooperation among all public agencies responsible for recreation and with voluntary organizations to provide well balanced recreation programs and to disseminate information about these programs to the public.
- County-wide planning for parks, and examination of means of financing county and city park systems.
- Development of city and county master plans for parks and recreation and a policy for securing park lands.
- A Planning Board policy for securing land for future development that adheres to Master Plan guidelines and fits into long-term plans for recreational development.
- Further development of the following areas should be considered: the trail system to connect with other park and recreation areas, a system of bikeways, a large regionally oriented multi-purpose park.

In 2012 the position was reviewed and updated again as follows.

The League of Women Voters of the Bozeman Area, believing that recreation is an essential public service, supports the following:

- Recreation programs and facilities provided to meet the needs of all ages, groups, and recreational interests and designed to involve non-participants.
- Coordination and cooperation among all public agencies responsible for recreation, as well as

with volunteer organizations to provide well-balanced recreation programs and to disseminate information about these programs to the public.

-Cooperation between city and county in planning for parks, including:

City and county planning board policies for securing land for future development that adheres to land-use master plan guidelines and fits into long-term plans for recreational development.

Development of city and county master plans for parks and recreation and policies for securing park lands.

Examination of means of financing acquisition, development and maintenance of county and city park systems.

-Further development of the following areas should be considered:

Expanding the trail system, including bikeways, to connect with other parks and recreation areas.

Aquatic facilities to meet community needs.

OTHER LOCAL STUDIES - The League of Women Voters of the Bozeman Area has studied the following local issues in the past, but either arrived at no consensus position or dropped the position when it became outdated.

Library Position (1989) - The League of Women Voters of the Bozeman Area believes that a basic function of local government is to support libraries. Therefore:

- Gallatin County should support all the Gallatin County libraries to the state statutory maximum, currently 5 mills, as allowed by law.

- Gallatin County should develop a reasonable contract with each county library.

- Gallatin County should distribute all appropriate revenues fairly and proportionately.

This been accomplished.

County Rest Home - A study of its facilities, adequacy, operation and financing was made from 1967 - 1971. League supported a bond issue for construction of a new rest home and dropped the position after this was accomplished.

Bozeman Schools - League studied the schools in the early 1960s and published a booklet "Roundup of Bozeman Schools" in 1965. The school position was moved from current agenda to continuing responsibility in 1967. An update study was undertaken in 1971. This study was continued sporadically through 1986, but was never completed. Currently League has no operational position on public schools in Bozeman, and no study is in progress.

Local Housing - supply and need, studied 1971 - 1973, no position.

Delivery of Social Services in Gallatin County - This study was begun in 1978 and continued through 1982. Health Services were emphasized in 1980 - 1982. League has no local position on social services.

Education for Family Living in Gallatin County Schools - Studied 1980 - 1982. No position was adopted.