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LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SOUTHWEST SANTA CLARA VALLEY
CAMPBELL, LOS GATOS, MONTE SERENO & SARATOGA

January 2022 VOTER Newsletter

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Announcements



2022 Annual Program Planning

Saturday, January 29, 10:00 p.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Please Reserve Your Time to Join Our Most Important Meeting of the Year! Contribute Your Ideas & Vote on the Future Programs & Actions of LWV

Registration Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZYtc-iopz8sH9AnNiG2Ad7gF7ZdLBn8OcpX>



Take our survey.

LWV 2022 Member & Program Survey

Dear Members, This year, our Racial Justice Committee decided to focus all our monthly public program events on Racial Justice Issues and have presented three outstanding programs thus far. While the total attendance has been good at all of the programs, we are concerned about the very low attendance by our own members.

Please complete this members' survey to help us better plan our meetings so that more of our own members attend. <https://forms.gle/GVtE3Zk8KsBjZaQw5>

HOUSING WEBINAR:

Wednesday, January 19, at 7:00 p.m.

California Housing: Past, Present, SB 9 and the Future


Wednesday January 19 7pm (virtual)

Fred Keeley

Former Speaker pro Tem of the California Assembly
Co-chair of Housing Santa Cruz County
Convenor of Santa Cruz Council Advisory Commission on Homelessness
Adjunct Professor at various CSU Campuses

- 1) the historic role of local government and land use;
- 2) the imbalance between job and housing;
- 3) the RHNA process;
- 4) SB 9 and 10; and,
- 5) the proposed constitutional amendment regarding local land use control.

Hosted by League of Women Voters - Southwest Santa Clara Valley



On Wednesday, January 19, at 7 p.m., Fred Keeley, former Speaker pro Tem of the California Assembly and Affordable Housing Advocate will give a talk on SB 9 & 10 and the proposed constitutional amendment, titled "[California Local Land Use and Zoning to Supersede Conflicting State Law Initiative \(2022\)](#)" by OurNeighborhoodVoices.com.

Registration Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZckdeCspjlvG9RvffnGNLn4TaRrt1zL1zPH>

Our League's most important meeting of the year, Program Planning, is scheduled for Saturday, January 29, 2022, at 10 a.m. Many new and sometimes even long-time members will ask, "What exactly is Program Planning and how is it different from a program event?" A program event is what we call our regularly scheduled public events that may occur monthly. These sometimes monthly events are usually related to a current area of League focus, i.e. voting rights, natural resources, housing... etc.

In the League, Program Planning is the annual process by which we (members) jointly decide where and how we will focus our resources — member time, resources, reputation— over the next year.

At this meeting, we align our League's work with the mission and priorities set forth by National and State LWV. In addition, we identify and set goals on how best to support our Annual Program Planning 2021-22 local communities. All League members are encouraged to attend, voice their opinions, and vote on our future programs and actions. This process is what makes the League a grassroots' organization—everyone's voice counts!

Please [register for the event](#) ASAP to help our planning and to get reminders to this important event. One week before the meeting, members will receive an email with the Program Planning Agenda and a packet attached. PLEASE read ahead of time and bring your ideas and feedback to the meeting. We look forward to seeing and working with you soon!

VOTER SERVICES



LEAGUE LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

As we start preparing for our virtual League's Annual Planning Meeting on January 29, it's important to be aware of all the Advocacy Work LWVC has been focused on this past year and how it correlates to our work on the local level. The LWVC Advocacy Team has been very active this past year—one of the current two-year Legislative session. The [Advocacy Wrap-Up 2021](#) contains highlights of the fruits of the team's labors. Here are a few updates about the League's Advocacy Program as 2022 begins.

"The Advocacy Program

If you haven't already, please sign up to attend a [Thursday, January 20, 6:00 p.m. Advocacy Teach-In & Tune-Up](#). This is an online version of the training that we offered in-person pre-COVID. It's designed for both new activists and League veterans who work with the League on statewide policy initiatives.

We recently did an online presentation called [Under the Hood - Advocacy with the League of Women Voters of California](#). To foster open discussion, we did not record the presentation. But the slides contain speaker notes that offer most of the relevant content. They also contain several graphs that illustrate our growth trajectory, showing that over the last decade we have more than doubled the number of bills on which we advocate."

In the 2021 Advocacy Wrap-Up, you can also read highlights of the League's hard-earned victories, some lamentable delays, and a preview of our goals for next year. As always, detailed letters related to all the bills on which we took positions may be found in our [Bill Status Report](#).

If any member is interested in becoming more involved in the very important League's Advocacy work, please contact me at egyick@icloud.com so additional information can be sent to you.

LEGISLATIVE INTERVIEWS:

the League. The League reports that are submitted are utilized in the LVVC's advocacy work.

Once again, our League will be organizing and/or participating in League's legislative interviews of CA Assembly Member Evan Low and CA State Senator Dave Cortese in either January or early February. We will be working with both the San Jose/Santa Clara League and the Cupertino/Sunnyvale League on these interviews. If you are interested in learning more about this process and/or participating in these interviews, please contact me at egyick@icloud.com.

CALIFORNIA'S PRIMARY ELECTION:

California's Primary Election is scheduled for June 7, 2022. Mail-in Ballots will be sent to all California registered voters early in May, 2022. This timeline determines that our League's Voter Services Team will start organizing and working actively in February, 2022! Since Candidate Forums will be held online again, there is a need for a candidate contact person, timers, question sorters, and moderators. If you are interested in serving in any of these capacities, please contact me at egyick@icloud.com.

Eleanor Yick, VP/Dir. Voter Services

DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Housing



2022-01-13 SB 9 and by-right approval

SB 9, State-Mandated Ministerial Approval Process or Local Democracy

Starting from [SB 35 in 2017](#), the state legislature has passed more and more bills that require the cities to approve housing or mixed-use projects through so-called by-right or ministerial approval without any public hearing or oversight based on "objective standards" only. Such ministerial approvals used to apply only to small projects or small amendments to large projects, but there was still a potential to appeal to either the Planning Commission and/or the City Council in case of any dispute on interpretation of the code or the approval criteria. But the state-mandated ministerial approval with no public hearing would make the approval by the planning staff final with no recourse, except through lawsuits. This is a tool intended to expedite housing production in California.

With [AB 68 in 2019](#), Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) or attached ADUs (granny units) could be approved through the state-mandated ministerial approval process with minimum 4 feet of setback and no parking requirements. With SB 9 in 2020, the state-mandated ministerial approval would be expanded to a lot split into two lots and/or any project with one or two units on a single-family lot with/without ADUs. "[SB 9: It's Not a Duplex Bill, It's a Fourplex Bill!](#)", by Best Best & Krieger LLP, provides a good summary of SB 9. It recommends the following for the cities:

1. Local agencies should adopt objective standards for these mandatory, ministerial lot splits and two-unit development projects so that the standards take effect before January;
2. And agencies looking at discretionary approvals in and around residential zones might need to consider this new four-fold by-right development potential.

Therefore, since local zoning standards were usually written with the discretionary approval in mind with no consideration for regulations of duplexes or lot splits, many city councils are scrambling to

Ever since 2017, a few hundred housing bills would be signed by the Governor in September to become effective in the coming January changing the way projects are approved or the way the Municipal Code is interpreted through the state bills that uniformly apply to all cities. "The [2020] new housing laws, among other things, relax regulations, streamline development procedures, increase incentives for the construction of affordable housing projects and further limit local control over housing development," according to [Best Best & Krieger LLP's Legal Alerts](#). Some argue that the housing crisis justifies such state control of local zoning, which "[could include more lawsuits against local governments](#)" brought by the Attorney General. But others are concerned that these bills [exacerbate gentrification in vulnerable communities](#), erode local democracy and limit the local city council's ability to [negotiate more affordable units](#) than the state laws require.

As the cities absorb the new state bills and revise their general plan to accommodate for multiple times more units in Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) for the next 8-year Housing Element cycle, a local control resolution by [California Cities for Local Control](#) was signed by hundreds of city council members along with a Constitutional Amendment initiative, titled "[California Local Land Use and Zoning to Supersede Conflicting State Law Initiative \(2022\)](#)", by [OurNeighborhoodVoices.com](#), are being circulated for signatures in order to qualify for the November 2022 ballot.

On Wednesday, January 19, at 7 p.m., Fred Keeley, former Speaker pro tem of the California Assembly and affordable housing advocate will give a talk on SB 9 & 10 and the proposed constitutional amendment mentioned above. Mr. Keeley will cover

- 1) the historic role of local government and land use;
- 2) the imbalance between jobs and housing;
- 3) the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) process;
- 4) SB 9 and 10; and
- 5) the proposed constitutional amendment regarding local land use control.

Liang Chao, Housing Director

Healthcare



LWVUS Healthcare News

In December our Board approved putting our name on an early supporter list recommending that the LWV US Program Planning Committee use language from the 2021 LWV New York State Positions on Healthcare and Healthcare Financing on the agenda for discussion and voting at the 2022 LWVUS Convention. This procedure is a grassroots effort to strengthen League support for universal Healthcare.

Barbara Lea, Healthcare Director

Natural Resources: Water and Our Future?💧



WATER: Conservation -- Save water, save our future

Since 2012 California has recognized that "every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes." The human

An LA Times journalist pointed out in 2020 that “people of color and poor communities have borne disproportionate harm from pollution.”

Yet, even Silicon Valley has experienced poor quality water due to pollution. In September 2000, the Silicon Valley Groundwater Cleanup project was recognized for its work in cleaning up 500,000 lbs. of industrial solvents in our groundwater—although recognizing at that time that “groundwater contamination still exists.”

With water supply increasingly stressed by climate change, what will the future hold? Can people without Silicon Valley’s resources meet the challenges of polluted water? Join our League’s February program on water and ongoing challenges for insight.

Meg Giberson, Natural Resources-Water, Director



Racial Justice

Slavery in California? Did you know there is . . . “a state task force, the first of its kind in the nation, established to examine the history of slavery in California and consider reparations for African Americans, particularly those whose ancestors were slaves.” . . . “The racism of slavery birthed an unjust system, an inequality that continues today, Secretary of State Shirley Weber, (our September Webinar speaker) who as an Assembly member sponsored legislation creating the task force last year, said at its first meeting.” Read the whole article: <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/How-free-state-California-wrote-slavery-and-16726398.php>.

MONDAY, JANUARY 17, 2022: Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

The Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday is an opportunity to reflect on the work and mission of Dr. King, and how much of it remains unfinished today. This has become especially apparent over the last year as the pandemic has exposed the dramatic inequities in Silicon Valley that have existed hidden in plain sight for decades. These inequities led our League to create a Racial Justice Committee, which has presented three excellent programs this year. All the issues/topics have been or will be presented through the lens of racial justice.

The Silicon Valley Pain Index has created an infographic that highlights many of these inequities. This infographic shows very sobering statistics about our society – and should be a wake-up call to all of us on our role and responsibilities. You can view the current Index report at this link: [https://www-old.sjsu.edu/hri/policy-and-praxis/svpi/index.php](https://www.old.sjsu.edu/hri/policy-and-praxis/svpi/index.php) and see a summary of Dr. King’s “Curious Formula” [here](#).

January 21, 2020: Santa Clara County Hosts National Day of Racial Healing Event

Join the County of Santa Clara to lift up racial and social justice efforts in our community through a series of events this month commemorating a National Day of Racial Healing. The County is hosting a community event on January 21 at the County Government Center, which will feature key speakers and an exhibit displaying art from local students expressing their views on racial healing. A calendar of other equity, healing and social justice events throughout the month is available at www.sccgov.org/sites/occ.

“We believe that our partnerships with the non-profit community, schools, internal agencies, and stakeholders help to make us stronger, and we want to shine a light on the great work being done to lift the guiding principles of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as well as the racial and social justice efforts of our communities,” said David Campos, County of Santa Clara Deputy County Executive, who oversees the Division of Equity and Social Justice.

Reception: 4 p.m.
Ceremony: 4:30-5:30 p.m.
County Government Center, Isaac Newton Senter Auditorium
70 W. Hedding St., San Jose
[Event Information](#)

Barbara Lea, Racial Justice Director

CITY NEWS & UPDATES



Los Gatos Town Council

January 2: Council member Rennie began serving a one-year term as mayor. Council member Ristow is vice mayor for the year.

Town Council voted to accept grants from the State Office of Emergency Services and Silicon Valley Clean Energy to fund the development of a battery storage system for the Library. The purpose will be to provide backup power to the building. The Library could then remain open during power outages and be a refuge for the community.

A 45-day urgency ordinance for implementing SB9 as of 1/1/2022 was approved. This allows Town staff to begin processing applications under the new housing law while Town Code is being updated. Several considerations to address in the current Town Code were discussed: affordability restrictions; historic district guidelines; occupancy limits; fire hazard mitigation; narrow streets with limited fire evacuation routes; building height restrictions; neighborhood notification of pending projects; maximum square footage of new homes.

Lynda Jandron, Los Gatos Town Observer

Saratoga City Council

December 15, 2021: The Heritage Preservation Commission recommended that the City Council conduct a public hearing on the proposal to designate 19174 DeHavilland Drive as an historic landmark.

It was also recommended that the Council adopt urgency measures to implement Senate Bill 9, which becomes effective January 1, 2022, for review such as lot splits and 2-unit developments in all Single-Family Zoning Districts.

Monte Sereno City Council

November 29, 2021: Council held a joint special meeting with the Site and Architectural Commission. The purpose was to study how to implement California State Senate Bills 9 and 10, which will have significant impact on local communities.

SB9 includes two main parts: it allows two dwelling units on a single-family lot (in addition to accessory dwellings) and it allows a one-time subdivision of single-family lots into two parcels (each with two dwelling units, but not necessarily additional accessory dwellings (ADUs or JADUs)). SB9 also mandates that projects subject to these regulations be reviewed without a public hearing, and that only "objective design standards" can be used.

residential planning. The difference between ministerial and objective standards was discussed, including how City needs (fire safety, rainwater water penetration, parking, setbacks, etc.) will be achieved.

December 7, 2021: Staff reported that Santa Clara County has approved a new redistricting map that places Monte Sereno in District 1, rather than the current District 5.

In response to issues brought up by SB9 and 10, and in support of local control in making effective decisions about housing, the Council passed a motion in support of a State of California Initiative Constitutional Amendment No. 21-0016, which "provides that local land-use and zoning laws override conflicting State laws." Wording of the initiative includes some exceptions. Late April is the deadline for completing signed petitions.

The Council elected the new 2022 Monte Sereno Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore: Javed Ellahie and Brian Mekechuk.

Linda King, Monte Sereno Observer

Campbell City Council

January, 2022: The City Council voted to extend the deadline allowing the temporary parklets in Downtown Campbell to March 31, 2022. Staff will look into the feasibility of allowing permanent parklets at some future date.

The RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Assessment) cycle will be from 2023 to 2031. Cities must present their "Housing Opportunity Sites" in 2022. For Campbell the number is approximately 3,000 new housing units to be built during that cycle. This is mandated by the State.

VTa has offered the Winchester Transit site for substantive affordable housing. Measure A funding may be available. The process of outreach to the community is just beginning. The first community meeting is scheduled for January 19.

Due to easing of requirements for building ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units), the number built each year has gone up substantially: 2018 had 5 built, 2020 had 54 built.

Jackie Costanzo, Campbell Observer

UPCOMING EVENTS

LWV SWSCV

Wed Jan 12

Special Board Meeting

Virtual, at 7:30 pm

LWV SWSCV

Tue Jan 18

Political Book Club

Virtual, at 7:00 - 8:30 pm

1) On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century by Timothy Snyder

2) Pain & Politics in the Heart of America by Jennifer M. Silva

Click here to enter the meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88222588472>

LWV SWSCV

Wed Jan 19

Housing Webinar

Virtual, at 7:00 pm

Registration Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZckdeCspjlvG9RvffnGNLn4TaRrt1zL1zPH>

Sat Jan 29

Registration Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9tN6sH9AnNiG2Ad7gF7ZZdLBn8OcpX>

DONATE

We rely on dues and donations to support our programs. Please consider making a donation to our local League of Women Voters general fund now. If you prefer to donate to our 501(c)3 tax-deductible account please, indicate that.

League of Women Voters SWSCV Donation

JOIN US

Come to a LWV-SWSCV team meeting and learn about important issues affecting you and your community. You can make a difference! **Learn More About Our Work and Programs** [on our Website!](#)

LWV SWSCV BOARD & ELECTED OFFICIALS 2021-22

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President, Sophia Kao
Vice Pres/Admin, Eleanor Yick
Vice Pres/Program, Ann Ravel
Secretary, Frances Zhan
Co-Treas., David Lee & Helen Wang

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County Council Co-Chairs, Tom & Danice Picraux
Education, Eleanor Yick (Int.)
Healthcare, Barbara Lea
Housing/Transp., Liang Chao
Membership, Aileen Kao
Natural Resources - Climate, Victoria Zhang
Natural Resources - Water, Meg Giberson
Observers, Barbara Lea
Public Relations, J Reynolds-Grabbe
Racial Justice, Barbara Lea

ELECTED OFFICIALS

National

President Joe Biden
www.whitehouse.gov
Senator Dianne Feinstein
www.feinstein.senate.gov
Senator Alex Padilla
<https://alex-padilla.com>
Rep. Anna Eshoo
<https://eshoo.house.gov>

California

Governor Gavin Newsom
<http://gov.ca.gov>
Senator Dave Cortese
<http://sd15.senate.ca.gov>
Assemblymember Evan Low
<http://asmcd.org/members/a28>

County

Supv. Joe Simitian

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