Wednesday, February 10, 2016
“Updates: Highway 68 / Pebble Beach Roundabout and Monterey County Transportation Investment Plan”

Guest Speakers Mr. Todd Muck, Deputy Executive Director at the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC), and Ms Ariana Green, Transportation and Public Outreach Manager, TAMC will speak on two important local transportation issues.

The Holman Highway 68 Roundabout will be the first roundabout on a state highway in Monterey County and will improve access to the Community Hospital, Pacific Grove, and Pebble Beach. Construction of the roundabout will begin in Spring 2016 and finish in Spring 2017. As Public Outreach Manager for the project, Ms Green will provide a presentation on how the roundabout will work, what to expect during construction, and what the benefits will be once construction is finished.

Mr. Muck will update us on what can be done locally to help fix our roads, provide service for those in need, and improve our economy. He will present the Draft Transportation Investment Plan currently under discussion.

Monterey County’s transportation system is aging. County roads and city streets are crumbling. While progress has been made on making our highways safer and reducing traffic, there are still significant safety concerns and traffic jams. At the same time our vulnerable populations—the elderly, children, and the disabled need safer and easier ways to get around. With a shortfall in state and federal transportation funding, community leaders agree that something must be done to fix our roads.

(continued on page 2)
The article on the opposite page is the second part of an excellent synopsis of issues regarding access to higher education in California by Kemay Eoyang. Part One was published in the January Voter.

As explained previously, the League of Women Voters California has a position on public education in California covering the University of California, California State University, and the California community colleges.

As a result, LWVC is unable to comment on or advocate for or against proposed policies and legislation. LWVC prepared study materials on access to higher education in California.

Minority Students
By 2030, it is estimated whites will make up 34 percent of California’s population while the 66 percent of the population will be persons of color. In addition, there is a growing generation divide. The senior citizen population has remained predominately white while the population of children under age four is predominately non-white. Like the tsunami of baby boomers arriving at college campuses in the 1960s, California now faces a tidal wave of minority students arriving at its college campuses.

In 2010, The Civil Rights Project at the University of California looked at how the structure of higher education in California restricts college attendance among all students but especially among students of color. While some would blame K-12 education for the unpreparedness of college freshmen, the Civil Rights Project blames the Master Plan for reducing minority enrollment. Students must meet eligibility requirements before admission but few minority students are deemed “eligible”.

The first criteria for eligibility is grades. Students of color are the least likely to have the highest GPA. The Master Plan restricts UC eligibility to the top 12.5 percent so minority students are not permitted. If you are interested in a study on these issues, plan to attend the February 17th meeting.

Janet Brennan, JanettB@montereybay.com

Californians and CSU by increasing their eligibility in greater numbers. The Project noted that the implications for continued under-representation are “sobering.” Because eligibility rates are lowest among the fastest-growing groups—particularly California’s Chicano and Latino populations—under-representation, “...in the state’s four-year sector is likely to worsen rather than abate over time.” The Project recommends lifting the Master Plan caps to make more students eligible for UC and CSU (https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6d36s98f).

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The second problem with the Master Plan is that to improve the eligibility rate for one group, the rates for other groups must decline. UC and CSU attempted to address these problems through outreach programs but were unable to make headway because white and Asian American students responded to the increasingly competitive environment at UC and CSU by increasing their eligibility in greater numbers. The Project noted that the implications for continued under-representation are “sobering.” Because eligibility rates are lowest among the fastest-growing groups—particularly California’s Chicano and Latino populations—under-representation, “...in the state’s four-year sector is likely to worsen rather than abate over time.” The Project recommends lifting the Master Plan caps to make more students eligible for UC and CSU (https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6d36s98f).

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from high school, only three out of ten Latinos completed courses required by UC and CSU. That does not stop Latino students from enrolling in college (43 percent), usually in a community college (65 percent). When it comes time to transfer, Latino students are more likely (63 percent) to transfer to a CSU campus.

Latino students face many barriers. They are more likely to be the first in their generation to attend college, to attend college part-time, to work while in college, and to come from low-income families. They are more likely to attend elementary schools with lower academic quality. The high schools they attend likely do not offer Advance Placement or honors-level course, employ less qualified and less experienced teachers, and have higher rates of expulsion, dropout, and poverty.

Even high-achieving Latino students who attend California’s top-preforming high schools are more likely (46 percent) to enroll in a community college—a phenomenon called under matching. One study found that these students lacked information about the differences between various college and universities, the admission process, and financial aid.

On arrival at community college, all students are required to take English and math assessment tests. Most colleges do not offer preparation for placement tests or allow students to retake them. Many students are unaware of the importance of these tests or the impact of these tests on their progress to a certificate, degree, or transfer. If they are deemed “unprepared”, they are required to take pre-college level courses. They may be placed from one to four levels below college-level and must take each course level in sequence before they can begin college-level courses.

In California, 85 percent of incoming Latino students take at least one pre-college level course. Why is this figure important? Students taking pre-college level courses are much less likely to ever make it to graduation—35 percent compared to the 65 percent who start college with college level courses.

At the CSU campuses, 45 percent of Latino freshmen graduated within 6 years and 67 percent of Latino transfer students graduated in four years. At UC, 75 percent of Latino freshmen graduated within six years and 84 percent of Latino transfer students graduated in four years (http://collegecampaign.org/portfolio/april-2015-state-of-higher-education-in-california-the-latino-report/).

Black Student Barriers
In May 2015, the Campaign for College Opportunity presented it’s findings on Black students to the US Commission on Civil Rights. Like Latino students, Black students face many barriers: low performing K-12 schools, inexperienced teachers, lower levels of school funding, and few counselors. When they arrive on college campus, 87 percent will take a pre-college level course compared to 75 percent of students overall. One-third of Black students will earn an associate degree, certificate, or transfer within six years. One-third of Black students will start at CSU and finish in six years. One-third of Black applicants to UC are granted admission. Black students are over-represented at California community colleges and for-profit colleges, and under-represented at four year public and nonprofit universities (http://collegecampaign.org/to-the-u-s-commission-on-civil-rights/).

Proposed Solutions
It has been more than fifty years since the Master Plan was published... There is a debate whether higher education in California is in need of modification. Several groups have made recommendations.

In 2000, the University of California President’s Office believed, “...the Master Plan is a wise and as sound a guide as it was nearly four decades ago, we believe it would be a mistake to waver from the commitment to universal access to higher education that Californians associate with the Master Plan.” (http://regepts.universityofcalifornia.edu/regemeet/july02/302attach1.pdf)

The Little Hoover Commission, an independent state oversight agency, recommended the following changes in October 2013:

1. Ten community colleges grant four-year degrees in fields that generate jobs (e.g. nursing or education).
2. Black students would focus exclusively on preparing students for transfer to UC or CSU. Those students who need remedial help would be offered a “gap year” program before transfer. A new polytechnic sector within CSU (similar to CalPoly) would offer three-year Bachelor of Science degrees.

3. Creation of a stand-alone California Open University offering online classes.

This would consolidate online activities in one place to reduce duplication while expanding offerings. The Open University could also offer textbooks, video, Internet, and in-person interaction.

4. Improve the pathway to college beginning in kindergarten—the Long Beach College model.

Suggestions include professional development for K-12 teachers, field trips to college campuses, four-year public and nonprofit universities (http://collegecampaign.org/to-the-u-s-commission-on-civil-rights/).

The Campaign for College Opportunity, whose focus is on civil rights, made several recommendations similar to the other groups. However they recommended that UC use race/ethnicity as one of many factors in weighing a student’s qualifications for admission. In other words, ask voters to modify Proposition 209, which banned race based affirmative action in admissions to public universities.


Kemay Eoyang, ckeoyang@msn.com
Lynn Santos, LWVMC Director for the Salinas Valley Unit, joined the League about eight years ago. “I got involved because I knew someone on the Board who invited me and I have a hard time saying no,” she explains with a laugh.

But she also believed that, “…the League has always had a great reputation. When I get my Voter Guide, I always look for what the League’s opinion is on the various issues.”

Lynn’s main passion is the League’s voter services in the Salinas area—working polls, candidate forums and studies of the issues. For now, though, she says she can’t put in as many hours as she’d like because, “I still work and put in a lot of hours at my job. So I’m not always as available for League work as others.”

Her job is vitally important—she’s Director of Finance for the Monterey County Housing Authority. Lynn has worked with the Authority, a quasi-government organization that offers housing for low income residents, for 20 years. “We have housing with low income restrictions, affordable housing, Section 8 housing, senior low income housing.”

In the future, Lynn says she’d like to see the League become more involved in voter registration and education. “The current campaigns going on are evidence that voters are not educated on the issues,” she says. “You can care about the environment, land use, affordable housing, but if you don’t have an electorate that cares, you can’t do anything. It seems that much of the campaigning we see now is just fearmongering.”

Surely, as the countdown to the upcoming elections continues, Lynn Santos and LWVMC will continue to do everything possible to educate those voters and increase voter turnout.

Nancy Baker Jacobs, PGAuthor@comcast.net
Draft Environmental Impact Statement (RDEIR/SDEIS) for the Plan, however it has long-standing policies supporting nonstructural alternatives for water supply in California. With respect to the Delta, these policies align with principles established by the 2009 Delta Reform Act that are now part of the California Water Code and the Public Resources Code.

Were the LWVC to support any new infrastructure for conveying water through or around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, it would have to be persuaded that the proposed infrastructure conformed to League policies, such that:

1. Realistic limits have been placed on the amount of water to be exported;
2. Strategies such as water conservation and wastewater reclamation have been and will continue to be employed to the fullest extent by both agricultural and urban users to minimize reliance on water exported through the Delta;
3. Federal and state entities intend to abide by environmental safeguards, including remaining stream flows for protection of fish and wildlife and their habitat, and for other in-stream uses;
4. The conveyance plan includes strong, binding environmental safeguards, including restricting residual stream flows for protection of fish and wildlife and their habitat, and for other in-stream uses;
5. The economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits of the project have been fully assessed.

The RDEIR/SDEIS failed not only to meet the League’s criteria for supporting new conveyance infrastructure in the Delta but also to conform to established law. The LWVC therefore cannot support the Administration’s California WaterFix.

A link to the full 17-page letter, which considers the above points in order, with references where applicable to the California Water Code, can be found at https://lwvc.org/statement/2015/oct/lwvc-comments-california-waterfix.

Trudy Schafer, Sr. Director for Program, LWVC

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Joeln the League of Women Voters of Monterey County

Any person of voting age, male or female, may be a member of the League!

Renew Your LWVMMC Membership.
If your membership has lapsed, please use the form below, or go to http://lwvmryco.org. Timely responses are appreciated as they help keep our local chapter strong.

Renewal letter and form gone astraay? Uncertain of your membership due date? Wish to make a donation? Want to become a new member?

Use the form below or contact:
Lisa Hoivik, Membership Director
LHoivik@comcast.net or 375-7765

Checks payable to LWVMMC
Mail to LWVMMC PO Box 1995
Monterey, CA 93942

Memorandrum Levels
$q250  Carie Chapman Catt
$q150 Elizabeth Cady Stanton
$q100 Susan B. Anthony
$q 95 Household (2 persons, 1 address)
$q 65 membership

Name(s) ____________________________________________________________

Address ____________________________________________________________

City                             State                           Zip Code

Phone                            e-mail

Send e-mail reminders for luncheons
Call to remind me of luncheons
Scholarship requested

Membership dues & contributions to LWVMC are not tax deductible, nor are donations to the Florence Currie Scholarship Fund. However, donations to the League of Women Voters of California Education Fund (LWVCEF) are tax deductible.

Trudy Schafer, Sr. Director for Program, LWVC
LWVMC 2016 Calendar

FEBRUARY

LWVMC Board Meeting
Monday, 8 February, 5:00pm
Mariposa Hall, 801 Lighthouse, Monterey
Contact: Janet Brennan, 659-2090
JanetB@montereybay.com

Lunch & Learn with the League
Wednesday, 10 February, 12 noon
“Highway 68 / Pebble Beach Roundabout and County Transport Plan”
TAMC Guest Speakers
Ms Ariana Green and Mr. Todd Muck
(details on front page)

Natural Resources Committee Meeting
Thursday, 11 February, 12 noon
"Anti-Fracking Petition"
Mariposa Hall, 801 Lighthouse, Monterey
Contact: George Riley, 645-9914
GeorgeTRiley@gmail.com

Program Planning Meeting
Wednesday, 17 February, 12 noon
"Discussion of LWV Sudies"
Mariposa Hall, 801 Lighthouse, Monterey
Contact: Janet Brennan, 659-2090
JanetB@montereybay.com

MARCH

Lunch & Learn with the League
Wednesday, 9 March, 12 noon
"Highway 68 Corridor Proposed Projects”
Guest Speaker: Mike Weaver

APRIL

WVCa Higher Education Study Consensus Questions Rating
Wednesday, 13 April 2016
(immediately following Lunch & Learn)
Contact: Diane Cotton, 521-7416
onceandroas@gmail.com