



League of Women Voters of Berea & Madison County
<http://lwvbmclub.org>
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OUR VISION FOR MADISON COUNTY

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

The League envisions a government that is responsive to the will of the people, shares in the solution of economic and social problems that affect the general welfare, promotes a sound economy and facilitates the solution of regional problems. We envision development policies that:

- Educate the public about cause and effect; choices and trends, over time.
- Reflect goals and plans adopted through a community-based process.
- Draw upon successful strategies for achieving a high quality of life.
- Foster a countywide system for land use planning that prevents and addresses sprawl.
- Reflect awareness that growth does not automatically benefit a community.
- Preserve each community's identity.
- Protect the environment and public health.
- Anticipate changing realities and demographics.
- Emphasize quality over quantity.
- Anticipate and address infrastructure needs and limits.
- Are applied consistently and fairly.

GOVERNANCE

The League envisions a democratic government that supports the informed and active participation of its citizens. We expect governmental bodies to protect citizens' right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible. The League envisions an efficient and economical government that hires competent personnel, is responsive to citizen concerns, clearly assigns responsibility, adequately finances operations, and coordinates among the different agencies and levels of government. We envision governance policies that:

- Emphasize inter-local cooperation to reduce duplication and achieve common goals.
- Ensure public decisions are made in public.
- Ensure discussions of significant public issues are held during public meetings instead of in private.
- Provide advance public notice of meetings and agendas.
- Promote public participation by meeting at convenient times and in accessible locations.
- Ensure public servants do not use intimidation to discourage public participation.
- Enhance the knowledge and effectiveness of public servants.
- Recognize and avoid conflicts of interest.
- Promote ethical behavior through proactive training and transparency.

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

The League envisions local government bodies that work cooperatively to promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest. Specifically the League envisions local leaders who will:

- Model energy efficiency and sustainability in public buildings, policies and practices.
- Institutionalize and provide incentives for environmental best practices.
- Promote energy conservation and energy planning.

- Promote, plan and invest in, energy-efficient transportation systems.
- Monitor and support safe disposal of chemical weapons at the Blue Grass Army Depot.
- Work to ensure that economic development plans and decisions include consideration of public health and environmental issues, as well as economic factors.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

The League envisions a community where every citizen is protected in the right to vote and that no person or group suffers legal, economic or administrative discrimination. Specifically the League envisions a government that will:

- Ensure local law enforcement personnel are trained to ensure fair treatment of all people.
- Avoid discrimination in distribution of public resources and in the treatment of groups and individuals.
- Emphasize rehabilitation over incarceration when dealing with crime.
- Seek alternatives to incarceration for nonviolent crimes.
- Support restoration of voting rights for those who have repaid their debt to society through the justice system.

TAXATION

The League envisions local governments that maintain equitable and flexible systems of taxation, including policies that:

- Ensure the fairness of tax and fee structures.
- Ensure taxes and fees are adequate to meet community needs over the long term.
- Raise taxes or fees when necessary to meet community needs.
- Provide information to the public on the use of tax proceeds.
- Provide tax relief or incentives only where it can be shown that such incentives will benefit the community and achieve long-term planning and development goals adopted by the community.

EDUCATION & YOUTH

The League envisions a county where every person has access to a high quality public education that provides equal opportunity for all and where opportunities for post secondary education are affordable, including policies that:

- Support implementation of the basic tenets of the Kentucky Education Reform Act.
- Support the Madison County Public Library system and its programs for youth and adults.
- Encourage opportunities for postsecondary education and life-long learning.
- Provide safe and healthy youth activities, developed in consultation with area youth.
- Encourage youth involvement in civic and community projects.
- Foster communication and collaboration with area schools, Berea College and Eastern Kentucky University.

HEALTH & WELFARE

The League envisions local governments that address basic human needs like hunger, housing, health care and child care through policies which:

- Promote public health initiatives and infrastructure that increases access to quality health care (including mental health) for all people.
- Provide health benefits for public employees.
- Promote healthy lifestyles and preventative health programs.
- Promote affordable health care.
- Promote safe and affordable housing.