

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LA PLATA COUNTY AFFORDABLE HOUSING POSITION

The League of Women Voters of La Plata County believes that La Plata County should strive to be a 'mixed community', defined as a community where individuals and families of all income levels, ethnicities and age groups live together within a reasonable distance of their workplaces and community services. The League believes that in order to reach and maintain that goal, an adequate amount of affordable rental and owner-occupied housing must be available. Additionally, the cost of providing such housing should be shared equitably by the entire community, without placing undue burden on any one sector of the economy or producing unintended consequences. The League agrees that government has a role in assuring adequate affordable housing.

The League urges that a regional housing authority be established and that all eligible governmental units within it participate. The League believes that the types of financing mechanisms/subsidies currently available to builders and developers and to qualifying low-income renters and purchasers in La Plata County should continue. Additionally, the League supports mechanisms which would provide down payment assistance for working individuals and families who are able to afford reasonable mortgage payments but cannot accumulate the initial investment and who do not qualify for other assistance.

The League believes that governmental units should use both incentives and requirements to encourage businesses, including developers, to provide affordable housing units and that the county and the governmental units within it should coordinate these incentives/requirements in order to assure that the county develops as a mixed community. We agree that inclusionary zoning, or an equivalent, should be used throughout the county and its municipalities as one tool to require developers to provide for affordable housing units. We agree that housing linkage fees assessed on businesses with low wage employees and on new residences above a certain size be considered as one tool to make additional funding available for affordable housing. Such linkage fees should not be unfairly burdensome, particularly on small businesses.

The League affirms in general the positions of the League of Women Voters of Colorado and of the United States on affordable housing.

This position was adopted by the membership at the Annual Meeting, May 11, 2004 and reaffirmed May 13, 2006.