



Municipal League Celebrates Centennial in 2010

March 18th Centennial Celebration Dinner

2010 is a landmark year for the Municipal League – the League will be 100 years-old! To celebrate our centennial, we're commencing a year of events with a Centennial Celebration Dinner on March 18th.

During this special evening we will take a look at the issues the Municipal League has tackled through the years, honor the 2010 Civic Awardees and join together to support the League's mission of promoting better local government, rising the caliber of public officials and the quality of public decisions.

Founded on May 23rd, 1910, the League quickly became a leading organization in the area's Progressive Movement—formed to fight government corruption and increase transparency. 100 years later, we have stayed true to our roots as an advocate of regional planning, growth management, public investment and open government.

Throughout our history we have been monitoring local government, evaluating candidates, and making recommendations on both public policy and ballot issues. The results of the League's work have broadened the conversation, introduced alternative solutions, and changed outcomes. Many members of our community can easily recall stories of their parents (and grandparents) volunteering with the League or of time spent on our candidate and policy committees. Most officeholders in the area have experience with the League by being part of our good government and candidate work.

Now it's time to celebrate our past and prepare for our future. We hope you will join us as we reflect on our first century of service and look to the League's next 100 years. Visit www.munileague.org for details.

League Releases Report on Land-Use Regulation

King County citizens lack consensus on locations for future growth

The Municipal League's newest report on land-use regulation was released December 1st. "Rights, Wrongs and Reforms: Selected Issues on Land-Use Regulation within King County," was the result of a two-year study by a nine member volunteer committee, co-chaired by Put Barber and Lucy Steers, past Board members and activists with the League. The Seattle Times, Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce and Publicola each covered the report in their publications.

The study originated from a review of the 2006 Property Rights Initiative, I-933. While the Municipal League opposed that measure, the issues raised by proponents of the initiative warranted an independent study. The goal was to assemble key stakeholders and listen carefully. The study committee sought the views and experiences of rural and urban property owners and those working in the land-use field, including residents, developers, advocacy groups and governmental officials and specialists, such as consultants and lawyers.

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Cast your vote for new board members and fill out the member survey—p. 3 & 4.

Committee members found that the initiative proponents had some legitimate complaints, although they were not necessarily about property rights. The report made findings and recommendations in the following main areas:

- Citizens throughout King County lack consensus on the location of future growth despite long-adopted growth management policies, which direct urban growth to cities and allow only low-density growth in rural and resource lands. *The report suggests some practical tools to address this intractable problem.*
- Revenue inadequacy is a major theme for local governments, especially for chronically strapped King County. *The state should help identify long-term structural solutions for urban counties and consider enabling new revenue sources.*
- Representation. King County provides zoning and permitting to unincorporated citizens as their local government, yet more than 80% of council members' constituents live in cities. *This pattern weakens representation for unincorporated residents and suggests the need for structural reforms granting them greater influence over decisions that directly affect them.*
- Permitting is a hugely challenging area of land-use regulation. Most cities' practices generally get high marks despite economic constraints. King County has had serious problems in its permitting practices, often related to permit fees. A recent court decision invalidated many of these practices. *Both adequate revenues and careful monitoring are required to ensure better performance.*



Other topics addressed in the report include the complexity of the regulatory environment, issues of fairness and equity in who pays for growth and environmental protection, and trust and mistrust of government. The report also identifies an extensive list of promising practices found among local governments. Despite major challenges of complexity, fiscal inadequacies and political conflicts, innovative practices and successes appear in many instances.

Put Barber, Lucy Steers and their committee deserve a huge thank you and kudos for their hard work and thoughtful recommendations.

To view the report, please visit <http://www.munileague.org/issues>.

Land Use Committee Volunteers

Land Use Committee Co-Chairs

Putnam Barber Lucy Steers

Land Use Committee Members

Margot Blacker Sarah Chandler Barbara Melber Linda Stores
AJ Culver Garrett Huffman Elisa Shostak

Committee Interns

Jon Christiansen Amy Hirotaka

View from the Chair

The Municipal League will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2010, and we're working hard to get ready for our Centennial Celebration Dinner on March 18th. The League got its start as part of the National Municipal League movement of the early 20th century, formed by leaders such as Theodore Roosevelt, Louis Brandeis and Frederick Law Olmsted. We are excited to continue the tradition and plan to make important civic contributions in the next century and beyond. If you haven't yet received an announcement of the Centennial Celebration Dinner, please log on to www.munileague.org and give us your current email address so you can receive notices of upcoming events.

Our candidate ratings and ballot measure analyses were cited in the media more than fifty times between July and November this election cycle. The visits to our ratings webpage more than doubled over last year. We're very proud that our work providing independent, non-partisan election information is reaching more people than ever.

A week ago, the League released its most recent policy study, "Rights, Wrongs and Reforms: Selected Issues on Land-Use Regulation in King County." This marks three major Municipal League studies within the past year—one on Metro Transit, another on the Port of Seattle and this one on land use. All were produced by volunteer committees of thoughtful, engaged citizens. Creating the space and bringing interested people together to study issues, monitor local government and make recommendations to policymakers is another hallmark of the League's 100 years. Can you imagine our region without this civic institution? In this age of fragmentation and niche interests, what other group do you know that offers the opportunity to be engaged with critical policy issues without having an underlying agenda?

We are looking forward to the new year, and we welcome a great group of new Board members. Please take a moment to cast your vote for new board members and fill out the member survey online or on the back of this newsletter.

Kathy Elias & Gabe Meyer
Co-Chairs, Municipal League Board of Trustees



Kathy Elias



Gabe Meyer



Ballot of Board Nominees

The following people are nominated to serve as Trustees of the Municipal League of King County subject to election by the membership. Board members will serve 3-year terms beginning January 2010. Please mark your ballots and return them by December 31. **OR complete online at: <http://bit.ly/LeagueSurvey>.**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sandra Archibald. Dean, Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington. Bellevue. | <input type="checkbox"/> Laraine Volkman. Retired Benefits Manager, University of Washington. Queen Anne. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joel Emans. Law student, University of Washington. Capitol Hill. | <input type="checkbox"/> Adam Walters. Attorney, Stoel Rives LLP. Seattle. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ryan Harkins. Attorney, Microsoft Corporation Madison Park. | <input type="checkbox"/> Chris Johnson. Reappoint for 2nd three year term. Policy Director, Office of the Attorney General. Bellevue. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Jensen. Owner, Jensen Roofing. Newcastle. | <input type="checkbox"/> Nick Williamson. Reappoint for 2nd three year term. Law student, University of Washington. Beacon Hill. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vanessa Lund. Project Manager, Cocker Fennessy. Pioneer Square. | <input type="checkbox"/> Approve entire slate of nominees to the board. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Matt Stubbs. Strategic Adviser II, Seattle City Light. Beacon Hill. | <input type="checkbox"/> (write-in) _____ |

Cut out & return to: 810 Third Ave, Suite 224 Seattle, WA 98104

Member survey on reverse



Municipal League of King County

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2009 MEMBER SURVEY

Please complete this survey and mail to the League office or complete online: <http://bit.ly/LeagueSurvey>

1. What are the most pressing issues facing King County and/or its cities and towns?

2. What would you like to see the League do more of? What kind of new program would you like to see?

How effective is the League at :	Great	Good	Fair	Not Great	Poor
Promoting better government in King County					
Promoting civic engagement in King County					
Rating local candidates across King County					
Studying issues across King County					
Giving members information they can use					

← Board ballot on reverse

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