



**Inside: A message from the Chair and information on Civic Awards and our Land Use Committee**

## **Municipal League Launches Port of Seattle Study**

The Municipal League of King County has launched a Port of Seattle Study Committee led by Bruce Carter, past chair of the Municipal League.

“Our goal is to enhance open, transparent and effective management and oversight of the Port of Seattle,” Carter said. The Port serves King County residents by operating Seattle’s maritime facilities and Sea-Tac Airport, as well as promoting economic development.

The study, conducted under the auspices of the Municipal League Foundation, will initially focus on the following topics:

- 1) the Port’s mission and governance,
- 2) the Port’s use of its tax authority, public funds and exemption from taxation,
- 3) the Port’s acquisition, use and disposition of its land holdings, and
- 4) the Port’s ethics, conflicts of interest and open-meeting policies.



*Port of Seattle CEO, Tay Yoshitani, presents to the League’s Port Study Committee*

The Committee will gather and analyze information over the next several months. Anyone with suggestions or concerns to share with the Committee may send email to [portinfo@munileague.org](mailto:portinfo@munileague.org) or leave a message at 206-622-8333.

The Municipal League’s involvement with the Port of Seattle dates back nearly a century. In 1911 the League successfully advocated for the creation of the publicly owned port to offset the influence of shipping and railroad monopolies. It last studied the Port of Seattle in 1992-1993.

### **Upcoming Events**

March 25: Members’ Quarterly Breakfast forum with Seattle School Superintendent

April 24: Civic Awards at Olympic Sculpture Park

# The View From the Chair

By Brad Meacham



*Municipal League Chair  
Brad Meacham*

King County in 2008 is hungry for leadership. So the Municipal League is stepping up by carefully studying issues, making specific policy recommendations and keeping track of how our representatives deliver.

The Municipal League -- now in its 98<sup>th</sup> year -- exists because its members want to make a difference in the greater Seattle area. We believe in the thorough study of issues without partisanship. Our goal is effective, accountable government that delivers better services to citizens. And we want action.

This year, we are retooling the Municipal League to better meet the challenge. We've added a group of energetic new board members, hired a full-time director and revamped our Web site.

We've also begun working on three critical issues. Our Transportation Committee is looking at King County transit and governance of the region's transportation agencies. Our Land Use Committee is studying the potential compromise between the rights of property owners and the community's need to protect open space and habitat. Our Port of Seattle Study Committee is examining the turmoil at the Port of Seattle with the goal of specific steps to improve governance.

But that's not all. In 2008, we are planning the strongest Candidate Evaluation Committee yet, with groups meeting in Bellevue, Seattle and South King County. Next month, we plan to launch quarterly breakfasts for League members, which will be an opportunity to meet with key decision makers and network with the people who implement the region's policy. We're also planning a must-attend Civic Awards, with an event held on April 24th at the Seattle Art Museum's Olympic Sculpture Park. For more information and to get your tickets, see [www.munileague.org](http://www.munileague.org).

Remember that none of this important work can happen without you. Please consider a personally significant financial contribution to support the League and consider volunteering on one of our committees. For information, call the League office at 206-622-8333.

## Meet our New Board Members

- **Kathy Elias** is an independent public policy consultant working in the areas of transportation, economic development and child welfare.
- **Cynara Lilly** comes to the Municipal League with a background in campaign management and public affairs. A native of Seattle, she is committed to issues of good government and local involvement.
- **Gabe Meyer** enjoys city, county, state, country and world politics. As the chair of the Candidate Evaluation program, he is excited to get people engaged in local elections.
- **Tony Williams** is the former chief of staff to U.S. Senator Slade Gorton and a partner at Washington Advocates. Tony is excited to be part of an organization committed to encouraging high-quality candidates from all backgrounds to run for elected office.
- **Nick Verwolf** is a partner in the Bellevue office of Davis Wright Tremaine, a major Seattle based law firm.
- **Kendee Yamaguchi** is an attorney and lives on the Eastside. A former official in the White House, she worked for the Office of Management and Administration and the Office of Public Liaison. She also has experience working in the Legislature and as a Television Executive.



*Municipal League board members in a breakout group at the annual planning retreat*

“Remember that none of this important work can happen without you.”

## Update on Municipal League's Study on Private Rights/Public Rights

Several months ago, the Municipal League launched its study on Private Rights/Public Rights. The study committee is examining the manner in which governments regulate land uses within King County, and in particular the conflicts between regulators and those being regulated. Our interest in this topic stems from our analyses of the two state Property Rights initiatives, R-48 in 1995 and I-933 in 2006. In both cases, the Municipal League opposed the ballot measures, but felt there were issues raised by proponents that warranted further examination.

In our study, we will be examining selected topics and interviewing individuals representing a broad range of perspectives. We want to understand the perceived problems, their severity, and whether they are amenable to reasonable solution. Among other resources, we are examining the package of reform legislation compiled after the defeat of R-48 to deal with problems identified by concerned citizens. We are also examining recent court cases to learn the judiciary's views on these issues. Our committee is interested in whether land use regulations, as written and administered, properly balance benefits to the community with fair and reasonable impact on people's use and development of land in King County.

We will include case studies illustrating typical problems and examples of successful resolution to those problems. We hope that our completed study will be useful to citizens and governments in improving the land use regulatory climate in King County.

Committee members, from throughout King County, provide diverse experience and expertise. We meet at noon, the third Tuesday of each month, alternating between Seattle and Bellevue. We will continue with information-gathering for the next several months, begin writing in the spring, and hope to complete the study by next fall. New committee members are welcome. Call the office for details.

## Civic Awards at the Olympic Sculpture Park

The 48th Annual Municipal League Civic Awards are quickly approaching. Save the date! The event will be held on April 24th from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Paccar Pavilion at the Olympic Sculpture Garden.

Nominations for this year's awards and scholarship applications have poured in. Winners will be announced and tickets will go on sale the week of March 10. In addition to purchasing individual tickets, tables -- or packages -- of eight will be available. Table sponsors and large donors will be invited to a special early VIP event where they can mingle with the winners and explore the park on a docent-led tour. Details on ticket and sponsorship pricing will be available in early March.

Last year's award ceremony at the Space Needle honored local standouts including the late Walt Crowley, State Representative Fred Jarrett and Randy Revelle. Our honorees drew record attendance and a sold-out venue. This year, the League is expecting to build on that success by moving the event to the Paccar Pavilion, which in addition to breathtaking views and impressive art offers increased capacity. Members should to buy tickets early to ensure entrance.

In addition to honoring this year's recipients, the event will also feature a heated outdoors bar, an artisan and locally sourced menu and showcase wines. With sunset occurring at 8:11 p.m., it promises to be a beautiful and exciting evening!



## Get involved with the League!

2008 is already an exciting election year and there's no better time to get involved with the Municipal League and its committees. Here are some of the ways you can help.

**Candidate Evaluation Committee** — Interview and research candidates running for local office in King County.

**Ballot Issues Committee** — Examine complex measures that face voters on election day, and offer well-reasoned analyses and recommendations to help guide voters at the ballot box.

**Administrative Support** — Help with the day-to-day operations of the League. Help with mailings, database administration, Web site updates and much more. Your help in the office is critical to the success of our programs!

Please contact the office to find out more information on these volunteer opportunities at 206-622-8333.

**MUNICIPAL LEAGUE OF KING COUNTY**

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**SAVE THE DATE — 2008 CIVIC AWARDS IS APRIL 24TH!  
VISIT [WWW.MUNILEAGUE.ORG](http://WWW.MUNILEAGUE.ORG) FOR DETAILS**



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**ABOUT THE MUNICIPAL LEAGUE**

The Municipal League of King County is a nonpartisan volunteer organization that has worked to ensure good government that is open, effective and accountable since 1910. The Municipal League is dedicated to improving the caliber of public officials and the quality of public decisions. For more information see [www.munileague.org](http://www.munileague.org).