

## The League of Women Voters of Alameda

P. O. Box 1645  
Alameda, Ca 94501  
www.LWVAAlameda.org

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LWVA Communications Committee.  
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Co-president: Alice Fried  
alicefried89@gmail.com

Co-president: Anne Spanier  
annespanierleague@att.net

VP Programs: Gayle Thomas  
blaze00031@aol.com

VP Membership: Ruth Dixon-  
Mueller dixonmueller@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Marian Breitbart  
mbreitbart@mac.com

Secretary: Anne McKereghan  
anne@youreastbayagent.com

Action Chair: Robertamarie Kiley  
rmkiley@gmail.com

Budget Chair: Ted Frey  
frey.ted@gmail.com

Communications: Georgia Gates  
Derr t.derr@comcast.net

Fundraising: Deborah Wright  
Wrightwaydesigns@hotmail.com

Voter Service: Dorothy Kerwin  
kerwindorothy@gmail.com

Voter Editor: Mari Clark  
meclark922@gmail.com

**The League of Women Voters** is a non-partisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We work to raise understanding of major policy issues and influence public policy through education. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and reached consensus on. In an era of proliferating powerful special interests, the League's advocacy in the public interest is increasingly recognized as an essential voice of democracy.



# VOTER

Promoting Political Responsibility through Informed  
and Active Participation

Volume 48, Number 6, June 2016

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## Alameda in the Making June 3, 2016, 9:30 AM Alameda Elks Lodge, Rathskellar RSVP Essential

[www.DevelopmentsAlameda.eventbrite.com](http://www.DevelopmentsAlameda.eventbrite.com)

The poster features a central illustration of a large, multi-story brick house with a gabled roof and a front porch, set in a lush, landscaped yard. Above the house, there are three logos: the 'ALAMEDA HOME TEAM' logo with a house icon and the slogan 'Homes are the Heart of Alameda'; the 'ALAMEDA Association of REALTORS' logo with a stylized house icon; and the 'LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ALAMEDA' logo. A yellow starburst graphic on the right side of the house says 'FREE COMMUNITY EVENT'. Below the house, the text reads 'Presents... ALAMEDA IN THE MAKING THE ONGOING STORY OF DEVELOPMENT IN ALAMEDA Friday, June 3 | 9:30am - 12:00pm | Alameda Elks Lodge'. Further down, it states 'Lunch will be provided. Optional Bus Tour from 1:00-2:30pm. Seating is limited. Reserve your seat now at: www.DevelopmentsAlameda.eventbrite.com'. At the bottom, it lists sponsors: 'EVENT SPONSORED BY: Bank of Marin' and 'BUS TOUR SPONSORED BY: Tim Lewis Communities', with the latter's logo and tagline 'Bringing five-star quality home'.

## President's Message: Fulfilling the Promise



Anne Spanier, Co-president LWVA

There has been a concerted effort made by many good government groups like the League of Women Voters (LWV) to register as many people as possible before the California Open Primary on June 7 which will determine the top two individuals who will face off in the general election on November 8 of this year. While many have learned that it is possible to register to vote on line with a cell phone no less, others have used the more traditional paper ballot at grocery stores and farmers Markets.

However, many individuals will come across the Top Two Open Primary method of electing candidates for the first time. Political parties have evolved over the last 100 years into two major and a few smaller organizations. Their volunteers put in many hours doing the work of party building through mission statements and platforms. People who joined the Republican Party or the Peace and Freedom Party for example, understood what the party stood for and what they were expected to support as a member. The parties therefore are the owners of their primaries and can restrict those who choose their candidate to registered Republicans in their state primary elections (closed primaries) or as some of the Democrats have in the past, open their primaries to anyone who is a registered voter. California recently voted for top two open primaries to allow voters more choices in primary voting. Rather than put forth a top vote getter from the major parties, voters may cross party lines and vote for whomever is listed on one long ballot. The two candidates receiving the most votes will face off against each other in the general election in November regardless of party

June 2016

affiliation. The presidential primary, however, remains a closed or semi-closed system.

Some people believe that the Open Primary system will provide voters with more choices while reducing the power of the political parties. Last October LWVA brought together a stellar panel from California government and the University of California to discuss this issue. There were a number of concerns about eliminating the voices of smaller parties such as the Independents or Green Party who will be unlikely to garner the high number of votes to finish in the top two. Another concern is that of reducing voter turnout when two like candidates finish in the top two. How will like candidates distinguish themselves from a similar candidate? Will they resort to personal attacks? In the meantime the voter is left in a confused state about the very long ballot and what it means for their candidates. It will take several cycles of voting to see what the consequences will actually be. Will voter turnout drop off? Will the demise of party leave a vacuum to be filled by organized interests with special agendas? Will campaigns become nastier due to less clearly defined choices?

This topic will be one that the California League of Women Voters should examine through a statewide study. Election reform is urgently needed. The League will be the watchdog to make sure it is fair and transparent. Please stay engaged in this reform. It is important that voting not be suppressed.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit [LWVAlameda.org/calendar.html](http://LWVAlameda.org/calendar.html) for more information

- Friday 3 June**  
9:30-12:30 Panel  
1:00-2:30 PM Tour
- COMMUNITY FORUM & BUS TOUR**  
**Alameda in the Making: The Ongoing Story of Development in Alameda**  
Learn about what developments are coming or are in the works from City staff, developers and housing experts; special presentation on Jean Sweeney Park. Co-sponsors Alameda Home Team, Alameda Association of Realtors, LWVA. **Alameda Elks Lodge**, 2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Rathskellar Room (downstairs)  
**Free event. Reserve at [www.DevelopmentsAlameda.eventbrite.com](http://www.DevelopmentsAlameda.eventbrite.com).**
- Friday 3 June**  
5:00 PM drinks  
5:30 PM dinner
- FIRST FRIDAY NO-HOST SOCIAL DINNER**  
Socialize with members and guests and enjoy a French-inspired three-course bistro meal with choice of entrees; prix fixe \$35 inclusive (\$5 extra for salmon or filet mignon). **Café Jolie**, 1500 Webster Street. **Reserve with [jeffcambra@earthlink.net](mailto:jeffcambra@earthlink.net), 865-7369.**
- Tuesday 7 June**
- CALIFORNIA PRIMARY ELECTIONS!**
- Saturday 25 June**  
11:30 AM-2:00 PM
- LWVA ANNUAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON**  
Speaker: Dr. Joi Lin Blake, President, College of Alameda.  
**Speisekammer Restaurant**, 2424 Lincoln Avenue just east of Park Street.  
**PLEASE MAIL YOUR RESERVATION WITH CHECK FOR \$36 TO LWVA, PO BOX 1645, ALAMEDA, CA, 94501. MUST BE RECEIVED BY MONDAY JUNE 20**
- Monday 27 June**  
3:00-4:30 PM
- BOOK CLUB**  
**Broad Influence: How Women Are Changing the Way America Works** by Jay Newton-Small. Discussion led by Shubha Fanse. [No book club in July]  
**Applebee's Restaurant**, 2263 South Shore Center [felicez@ymail.com](mailto:felicez@ymail.com), 865-4329
- Monday 4 July**
- JULY 4<sup>th</sup> ALAMEDA PARADE. LWVA will be entering!** Ride in a convertible! Wear a banner! Make a sign! **Demand Votes for Women!** Contact Deborah Wright [wrightwaydesigns@hotmail.com](mailto:wrightwaydesigns@hotmail.com) (510) 908-3939 to help plan and participate.
- Saturday 6 August**  
9:00 AM-2:00 PM
- LWVA BOARD RETREAT**  
Plan priorities, committee work and events for 2016-2017. Bring your ideas! All LWVA members are welcome. **First Congregational Church**, 1912 Central Ave. @ Chesnut
- Monday 22 August**  
3:00-4:30 PM
- BOOK CLUB**  
**Game Changers: Twelve Elections That Transformed California** by Steve and Susie Swatt, Jeff Raimundo and Rebecca LaValley. Discussion led by Kathryn Duke.  
**Applebee's Restaurant**, 2263 South Shore Center [felicez@ymail.com](mailto:felicez@ymail.com), 865-4329
- Thursday 15 Sept.**  
7:00-9:00 PM
- LWVA BOARD MEETING**  
All LWVA members are invited to attend monthly Board meetings.  
**Alameda Hospital**, 2070 Clinton Ave. @ Willow, Conference Room C.
- Thursday 22 Sept.**  
7:00-9:00 PM
- LWVA FALL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**Fall season activities launch for members, guests and the public.** Location TBA.
- Monday 26 Sept.**
- BOOK CLUB**  
**Being Mortal** by Atul Gawande. Discussion led by Marti Burchell.  
**Applebee's Restaurant**, 2263 South Shore Center [felicez@ymail.com](mailto:felicez@ymail.com), 865-4329

# **Alameda in the Making**

## **The ongoing story of development in Alameda**

**Date:** Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016

**Panel:** 9:30 am to 12:30 pm **Optional bus tour:** 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

**Location:** Alameda Elks Lodge, 2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Rathskellar

**RSVP Essential:** [www.developmentsAlameda.eventbrite.com](http://www.developmentsAlameda.eventbrite.com)

This community forum offers presentations about developments that are coming to Alameda or are currently underway and the impact these developments will have on the City's housing shortage. Come to hear project updates and future development plans. Be prepared to ask questions and offer feedback to those developers & organizations sharing their housing information.

This is one of several ongoing forums about community development information and related Alameda issues. It is an excellent opportunity for the public to learn and participate in a discussion about these new Alameda developments with those individuals involved in making these proposals a reality. Currently, there are both residential & commercial projects coming to Alameda

### **Panel of (invited) Speakers:**

- **Helen Sause (3 min)**
- **Vanessa Cooper AHA (15 min)**
  - Current affordable housing projects in the City
  - Income levels for subsidized housing rentals and below market-rate homes for purchase at moderate, low & very-low income levels
  - Results of Alameda's 40 year multifamily housing deficit on current rental shortages
  - Importance of Housing Element for the City
- **Mike O'Hara from Tim Lewis Communities (15 min)**
  - Status of Star Harbor/Del Monte project
  - Overview of proposed Encinal Terminals project
  - Focus on below market-rate homes
- **Sean Murphy from Alameda Marina development (15 min)**
  - Brief overview of project & current timeline
  - Number of total homes and number of BMR homes for moderate, low & very-low income levels
- **Andrew Thomas, City Planner (20 min)**
  - Update on current housing developments
  - How are market-rate homes allowing the City to increase stock of affordable housing? What other options if there were no housing developments?
- **Panel Q&A session (30 min)**
- Featured presentation: Jean Sweeney Open Space Park (25-30 min)
  - **Amy Woolridge from Alameda Recs & Parks Dept.**
    - How much funding is needed and how much has been received?
    - How did the \$2M contribution from Tim Lewis Communities move this project forward?
    - Overview of park design & amenities
    - Presentation Q&A (15-20 min)

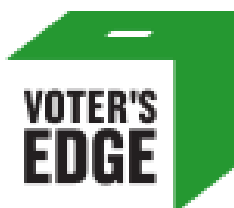
**Morning refreshments and lunch provided to all attendees.** This event will be offered free to the community by a Smart Growth Action Grant by the National Association of Realtors.

**Questions about event? Contact Patricia Young, Alameda Home Team, [aht@AlamedaHomeTeam.org](mailto:aht@AlamedaHomeTeam.org)**

## Welcome to Voter's Edge

[www.votersedge.org](http://www.votersedge.org)

Like **Smart Voter** did in the past, **Voter's Edge California** provides unbiased, in-depth voting information on candidates and ballot measures. This year, we've added **campaign funding information** and a high quality Spanish translation to State and Federal races. Plus all of your trusted League Voter Service publications are on Voter's Edge California including **the Pros & Cons and the Easy Voter Guide**.



With Voter's Edge California, voters can:

- Access their full, personalized ballot by entering their address.
- Get in-depth information on candidates, measures, and who supports them.
- View candidate biographies, top priorities, answers to questions, photos, policy videos, endorsements, and detailed information about who funds their campaigns.
- Browse unbiased explanations of ballot measures; find out who supports, opposes, and funds them.
- Check where, when, and how to vote, including information on their local polling locations.
- Keep track of their choices to make voting easier.
- Share information about the election with friends and family.

## Vote 'yes' on Prop. 50 and Measure AA

**Alameda Journal 5/18/16 Letter to the Editor**

On June 7, Alamedans will cast their vote for two ballot measures -- statewide Proposition 50 and San Francisco Bay Area Measure AA. The League recommends a "yes" vote for both.

Prop. 50 is a constitutional amendment that will give the state legislature clear authority to discipline members by suspending them with or without salary and benefits by a two-thirds vote of the members of that house. It is a step toward accountability for our elected officials.

Measure AA is \$12 parcel tax that will generate funding for restoration of San Francisco Bay wetlands, benefiting people, wildlife and the Bay Area economy. The measure will expand bay trails and shoreline access and protect low-lying communities and infrastructure from floods.

The League is a nonpartisan organization and does not support or oppose candidates. We advocate on issues where there has been member study and agreement.

For more information go to [votersedge.org](http://votersedge.org).

**Karen Butter**  
**League of Women Voters Alameda Action Committee**



# Will Bay Area Regional Government Agencies Merge?

## Report from Meeting of the Assembly Select Committee on Regional Planning SF Bay Area

May 20, 2016

The consultant tasked with recommendations for **merging The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)** has produced seven options:

Option 1 – No structural change

Option 2 – Hire an independent Planning Director to manage all planning functions

Option 3 – Establish a new Joint Powers Authority to oversee all planning functions

Option 4 – Create a new agency and regional governance model

Option 5 – Create a new comprehensive regional agency and governance model

Option 6 – Execute a contract between MTC and ABAG to consolidate *planning* functions within MTC and enter into a Memo of Understanding (MOU) to pursue new governance options

Option 7 – Enter into a Contract between ABAG and MTC to consolidate *staff* functions under one executive director and enter into an MOU to pursue new governance options (functional consolidation)

Three of these have been given serious consideration. The last has been adopted by ABAG, but with little enthusiasm. ABAG depends on MTC for funding their housing, land use, and environmental planning, and this planning, together with planning for transportation, is required by SB375, the Sustainable Communities Act, in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

This raises several questions: Does this merger require action by the state legislature? How long will the merger take under the various options? Is this a step toward regional government for the San Francisco Bay Region?

At the May 20 meeting, Committee Chair Tony Thurmond began by pointing out that MTC is a creature of the state and any action changing the governance structure would require legislative action. (But see below.)

The consultant reported they favored Option 6, which consolidated planning staff, rather than Option 7, consolidating all staff. Option 4, favored by many local governments, would take too long. She expects implementation under Option 7 to take about six months.

Ezra Rapport, Executive Director of ABAG, answered the question re legislative action. Since the Association of Bay Area Governments is a Council of Governments, a voluntary organization, not a state agency, it can enter into a Contract for Service which allows its staff to merge with MTC staff. He played down disagreements with MTC and assured the audience that ABAG could work with Option 7, which the ABAG General Assembly had voted for the previous evening. However, he said that this vote had been taken under threat. ABAG is happy with MTC planning transportation, but MTC should not have a decisive voice in planning for land use and housing. For ABAG to be dependent on MTC for funding is “not a sustainable governance model.” ABAG should have funding from the state. “Governance and funding should go hand in hand.”

Randy Rentschler, MTC Director of Legislation and Public Affairs, said he expects MTC to go for Option 7; policy differences are “not major.”

As to whether this is progress toward regional government: not much. Option 7 does include a MOU to pursue new governance options. Several speakers, including assembly members and mayors, said that should be done. For this, Option 5 makes better sense. A regional governing body should include the Air Quality Management District and the BCDC (Bay Conservation and Development Commission) as well as ABAG and MTC.

**Sally Faulhaber, LWVA Liaison with LWV Bay Area**

**JOIN LWVA! IT'S EASY! VISIT <http://lwvalameda.org/join.html>**