

THE VOTER

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Empowering voters. Defending democracy.

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and confidence to participate.

Message from the President

I want to begin by thanking Maurie Louis for her leadership over the last two years. It is a daunting task keeping track of all that the League has going on over several levels of membership. From the President's calls to monthly board meetings, the Voter, and Forums, Maurie has been there to lend a hand or take a leadership role. Thank you Maurie, for all you have done for our organization.



Although we have just finished our fiscal year, we must jump feet first into the political year ahead. Registration for candidates for Kitsap County Offices ended on May 19th. **Our primary election is August 1, 2023.** There are many important races and that means ramping up a **forums committee**, one of the most essential roles the League of Women Voters performs. These forums require many people in many roles (moderators, Zoom hosts, timers, and publicity, to name a few) so please consider being part of this important work.

I look forward to working with our newly elected and returning board members. I would like to see a focus on greater membership engagement, and a return to our organizational roots with a particular focus on voter services and election forums during the 2024 election year. **The board will meet on June 3, 2023,** to map out our plans. As always, League members are welcome to attend.

Thank you for putting your faith in me to be your president. I will do my best to live up to the expectations. Oh, and Maurie—where is the tiara?

Robin Muir, President

Remembering Judy Matchett

We recently lost one of our life members who contributed so much to our local League. Judy Matchett was on the LWV-Kitsap Board for at least 10 years and served as chair of the Natural Resources Committee.

She led studies and consensuses on Natural Resources; Open Space, Parks, and Recreation; and Water Resources and helped develop our positions on those topics. She also led the effort for the League's participation in the Kitsap Water Festival, starting in 1994 and lasting until recent years.

In 1993 Judy was appointed to the Kitsap County Open Space Committee, which later became the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and served for many years. In 2009, Judy and her husband, Bill, were presented with the Mother Earth Award by the West Sound Conservation Council. Judy Matchett not only contributed to the League but to the entire community. She will be truly missed.

Catherine Ahl



Welcome New League Members!

Marla Powers – Poulsbo

Marla has attended many League of Women Voter events across Washington State. She loves what the League does and respects the thoughtful actions taken by the organization. She has been a land use planner across Washington State for the past 20 years. She currently holds an Environmental Planner position for the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe. She is interested in learning more and lifting a stronger voice in environmental issues.

Brynn Felix - Poulsbo/Suquamish

Brynn is currently chair of the Suquamish Citizen's Advisory Council. She currently serves as Counsel to Peninsula Community Health having spent a career promoting social justice issues and community involvement.

Daera Dobbs – Poulsbo

Thank you to Rosalind Renour who met Daera at a story time for toddlers at the Poulsbo library and invited her to join League. Daera did just that! She is a retired educator and voter advocate interested in community education programs, voter services, and early childhood education.

Carol Larsen, Membership Chair

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Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan Update

The Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan is part of the overall planning puzzle that includes Washington state, the central Puget Sound region (King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish), and all individual counties. Kitsap County is moving into the second phase now that the preliminary choices have been made. The goal is to plan in a way that is consistent with the other three counties so that shared needs – such as transportation – will work harmoniously from one county to the next.

However, the County Plan does not directly impact city actions. Cities have their own comprehensive plans, so if you are only interested in your city – Bremerton or Poulsbo, for example – you need to comment on your city’s comprehensive plan directly. Of course, within the County, coordination is key, whether the issue is transportation, wastewater, or new development projects.

Though the three Kitsap County Commissioners will make the final decision, comments from the public will influence their thinking. That’s why public comment is such an essential part of this process. The current public comment phase is about revising goals and policies in the various elements to address new state requirements, changing local conditions, and community needs. Many may conflict with one another, pitting housing affordability against climate change, for example, and finding balance will be essential.

Housing, Housing, Housing

Housing has always been important but even more now with the housing crisis creating real urgency for the Housing element and possible clashes with other elements. Even workers with full time jobs are struggling to find available housing, whether buying or renting. Housing affordability is the biggest issue, by far. While home prices are driven by supply and demand, refusing to plan as a means of discouraging newcomers does not work and only drives prices up further.

As it stands now, 80 percent of Kitsap’s current housing capacity is zoned single family. To make gains in home construction, development must shift from the overwhelming dominance of single-family housing to the missing middle types to allow more housing choices: ADUs (additional dwelling units), duplexes, triplexes, quads, and small apartments. In other words, the same housing types that were commonplace before they were made illegal.



WHAT IS IN A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

- **Land Use** (Zoning and Urban Growth Area/UGA Sizing)
- **Economic Development** (Employment)
- **Environment** (Critical Areas and Shorelines)
- **Transportation** (Roads and Transit)
- **Parks, Recreation, Open Space**
- **Capital Facilities** (Utilities, Buildings, Services)
- **Housing and Human Services**
- **Sub-Area/Neighborhood Plans**

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Antidotes to sprawl, like increasing maximum density and lifting parking mandates so more projects will pencil out, are critical to the dense urban environment encouraged by the UGA. These are the strategies that planners and developers need if you believe, for example, that more housing must be built to address homelessness.

But here’s that problem of balance—you might think a high priority Housing component would mesh naturally with the Population and Employment components, but it can create a series of complications. Let’s say the county needs more housing—where should it be built? If farmland and sensitive wildlife habitats are to be preserved, the development needs to go elsewhere, preferably to established urban areas, as the Growth Management Act specifies.

And that’s where you come in, Jane Q. Public, with your good ideas and your fresh takes on gnawing problems. Think about what you want Kitsap County to become in the next decades, and help our County Commissioners make well-balanced, forward-looking choices.

Comments on existing [Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies](#) are due by June 1, 2023. Submit via comment box in each chapter.

The key period for public comment will be between October 2023 and February 2024, followed by a final round of public comment after June 2024.

Get Involved

There are several ways to be involved in the Comprehensive Plan Update.

- Sign up to receive text or email notifications, including project announcements, information about outreach events, surveys, and other public participation opportunities. Select “Comprehensive Plan Announcements” from the list of topics.
- Send an email to compplan@kitsap.gov to contact project staff and let them know what you think.
- Attend a meeting when there are scheduled upcoming public events.
- If you would like the Comprehensive Plan team to give a presentation to your community, please reach out to compplan@kitsap.gov.
- More opportunities to participate will be added throughout the process.

| UPDATE SCHEDULE | | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Update is Due No Later than December 31, 2024 | | | | |
| Current Schedule Targets October 2024 to Avoid Holiday Season. | | | | |
| Preliminary Alternatives Selected | Draft EIS, Comp Plan and Regulations Released | Preferred Alternative Selected | Final EIS, Comp Plan, Capital Facilities Plan and Regulations Released | Board Approval of Final Documents |
| Apr 2023 | Oct 2023 | Feb 2024 | Jun 2024 | Oct 2024 |
| LEGEND | | Document Release | Board Hearings | |

Resources

- Comprehensive Plan Update: https://www.kitsapgov.com/dcd/Pages/ComprehensivePlanUpdate_2024.aspx
- Comprehensive Plan Chapters: <https://www.kitsapgov.com/dcd/Pages/Comprehensive-Plan-Chapters.aspx>
- 2024 Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan Balancing Community Priorities with Eric Baker: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwHfFuF0ogbM>

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Community Members March in Support of Latino Community

On May 18th, more than 150 people showed up to protest months of what is perceived as little to no action in response to numerous complaints to the North Kitsap School District (NKSD). The complaints allege racism, discrimination, and threatening behavior. People marched in support of Latino/a/x and others in the BIPOC community, calling for the Board to respond to the numerous allegations that began late last year.

Frustrated by what has been seen as little to no action, parents began reaching out to various organizations seeking assistance with the growing number of problems. In February, Kitsap Advocating for Immigrant Rights and Equity (KAIRE) outlined some solutions to address the complaints:

1. Equity Concern form: Improving the ability to report issues when they happen.
2. Translation and Interpreting: Critical communication (critical needs to be defined) will be translated in the top three languages.
3. English Language Acquisition Student Supports Curriculum.
4. Professional development for all administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and any staff that are in contact with students and families.
5. Ethnic/Race Community Liaisons: NKSD needs a community liaison to provide direct support to families.
6. The Latino/a/x community would like to see the 2-, 3- and 5-year plan that is currently in place to meet the needs of both students of color and their parents.
7. Education Equity Council: Reinstate the Equity Council, including the 4-6 community liaisons from the district.

During this time, the LWVK became aware of the issues regarding English Language Development Services. To understand the requirements, an inquiry was made to the Washington Office of Superintendents of Public Instruction (OSPI). OSPI's Director of Multilingual Education Kristin Percy Calaff responded, "All eligible multilingual English learners have a civil right to be provided with English language development services regardless of the program model in which they are served. That means that in a dual language program, these students should be receiving support to develop their English skills during the English instructional part of their day."

As a result of OSPI's response, a letter was sent from the LWVK on March 4th, 2023, to the NKSD. President Maurie Louis wrote, "ELL students in the Dual Language Classes are being given limited English Language Development services, and the teachers in these classes are expected to be doing much of the English Language Development teaching rather than someone who has been trained specifically to teach this instruction." She went on to request that Dual Language classes be given during the English Language Instruction.

In early May, the NAACP hosted a Town Hall for the Latino/a/x community. Since the initial complaints, there has been increased hate speech and even threats to kill or harm directed at those in the Latino/a/x community. Police were engaged and were present during the Town Hall. With so much violence being reported in the news, parents and others in the community have expressed concerns about the recent threats of violence including a student's use of Nazi symbols and racist comments.

The NAACP has scheduled another Town Hall on 5/25 at 6:00pm with the NK School Superintendent and Latino community to discuss and review requests that have been made by the NAACP, on behalf of the families, to the NKSD.

This continues to be a developing story, please check out the articles recently published in the *Kitsap Sun* for additional details and the Voter will continue to provide updates.

- May 2023: [Hundreds in Poulsbo protest at NKSD over racial discrimination concerns \(kitsapsun.com\)](https://www.kitsapsun.com)

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- April 2023: [North Kitsap schools reverses cancellation of Native American Honoring \(kitsapsun.com\)](https://www.kitsapsun.com)
- February 2023: [Latino parent group meeting with North Kitsap schools over race issues \(kitsapsun.com\)](https://www.kitsapsun.com)

Catherine Freudenberg, Voter

Committees

Early Education: 0 to 3

April and May have been busy months. During April we prepared our PowerPoint presentation to the Kitsap Democratic Women's Club and presented it on April 26th. As the legislative session had been completed, we were able to make changes to the report. Happily, childcare and early education funding were increased in various ways, reflecting the continued support of the Washington State Legislature.

There was a good size turnout that included Greg Nance, a candidate being considered for the third Kitsap superintendent position. Except for one or two video glitches, all went well thanks to Judie Kasnick who arranged for the meeting and Rhonda Fairgrieve who worked with the video engineer.

Program for Early Parent Support (PEPS)

In May, we met with a representative of PEPS (the Program for Early Parent Support) to learn more about this successful program available to parents in King County and surrounding areas. Unfortunately, it is not yet available in Kitsap County.

This program is structured to work within a local community to bring together expectant parents, new parents, and in some cases, parents of older children, in a social environment and with a facilitator for 8 to 12 weeks. Many new and expectant parents have found these meetings quite helpful and a good many particularly enjoy the social aspects - most important for working parents - as well as the program itself. In fact, many families remain friends long after the program is completed.

PEPS has a licensed curriculum that it shares for a fee with organizations or small businesses. If PEPS were to be active outside the Seattle area, it would need a sponsoring group or organization.

Although the 0 to Three Committee is particularly interested in reaching out to disadvantaged parents, it also feels that all parents, particularly working parents, are stressed as well. We do intend to stay alert to a situation where PEPS could be introduced to local parents through a sponsoring group. If any member has thoughts about this, we would love to hear from you.

Zoom Meeting with Carolyn Brennan, Associate Professor at WWU

At our monthly Zoom meeting on May 18th, we were joined by Carolyn Brennan, Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education at Western Washington University, who spoke with us about her work at the Olympic College campus. She offered us her insights into how best to marshal our forces in our effort to introduce early brain development at the high school level. We were also pleased to welcome two new League members to this meeting.

After the meeting, the committee made plans to meet in mid-August for a relaxed picnic to touch base, chat, and do some more strategizing.

Rosalind Renouard, Chair

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DEI Committee

The DEI Committee has a few things on our radar this month:

1. We are looking forward to our **webinar with the Suquamish Tribe on “Voices with the Kitsap Community” on Friday, June 16 at 10:30AM - 12:00PM**. Tribal Council Chairman Leonard Forsman and other tribal members will speak. There are many events of interest that the Suquamish Tribe is sponsoring in June. Check these out at the bottom of the webpage at: <https://suquamish.nsn.us>
2. DEI is collaborating with the Kitsap County Accessible Communities Advisory Council on trying to improve the county’s accessibility. If you are interested, please contact Pat Troxel. The Advisory Council is primarily concerned with the accessibility of persons with wheelchairs or with other mobility issues and with persons with accessibility issues because of their visual difficulties and/or blindness.
3. DEI is concerned about the North Kitsap School System’s record of poor responsiveness to complaints of harassment, bullying, and discrimination by students from peers and staff. In addition, they have reported inadequate English Language Learner instruction and inadequate translation and/or interpretation services for parents who do not speak English. They have reported that critical communication is not being sent out consistently in Spanish or other languages that have significant numbers of parents who do not speak English.



Furthermore, they have reported that the form for submitting complaints to the NKSD is difficult to use and should be made more community friendly. They suggest reinstating the Equity Council and having a liaison from the school to the Latino/a/x community. More information can be gleaned from the *7 Solutions Letter*, created to outline the issues. Please contact Susan Griggs for a copy of the letter.

The Latino families are also very concerned because there was a threat from a high school student on April 11th, which appeared to many as a credible threat. The student put on social media photos of himself with a Nazi armband with a soft rifle, saying that he was on his way to school, and another saying, “death to all beaners (Mexicans).” The school superintendent did not notify the families of the threat, but the social media sources did let them know. The police arrested the student and asked the prosecutor to charge him, but he has not yet been charged. There is a town hall on May 25th where the school superintendent says that she will tell the community the plan for dealing with threats and discrimination, and what she has done about all the allegations of discrimination and bullying that have been turned in. The May 22nd *Kitsap Sun* has an article about a protest/march that the Latino/a/x families organized on May 18th.

4. The 3rd Annual HEAL **“Teach Truth: Freedom to Learn” event will be in Bainbridge on Saturday, June 10th from 9:30AM to 12:00PM**. It will start at the Bainbridge Island Historical Museum at 9:30AM, where signs will be made to use during a march. Speakers will talk starting at 10:00AM about the importance of teaching the truth. Then at 10:30AM, the participants will march to the Bainbridge Library, where there will be a panel discussion at 11:00AM.
5. The **Juneteenth celebration at Evergreen Rotary Park in Bremerton on Saturday, June 17th, will have a table for registering voters**. Please contact Susan Griggs if you are willing to assist with this event. More information at: <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=577899654455414&set=a.426271826284865>
6. **Bainbridge Island is having a Juneteenth Celebration on Sunday, June 18th**. More details to follow.

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The DEI Committee meets via Zoom on the first Friday of the month.

Next meeting: June 2nd, 10:00AM

Contact Susan Griggs at 509-668-2888 or susan.griggs0803@gmail.com

Susan Griggs, DEI Chair

Membership Committee

The League values your membership which supports our important work to empower voters and defend democracy. Your dues pay for membership in the state and national League with just a small amount retained for our local League. **Membership begins on July 1st of each year.** For those members who join between April 1st and June 30th, your dues are paid through the following fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

If you wish to make a tax-deductible contribution to our Education Fund, please write a separate check.

ONLINE: Make checks payable to LWV-Kitsap or use PayPal, accessible through the “For Members” tab on our local website: <https://www.lwv-kitsap.org/>.

BY MAIL: LWV-Kitsap, PO Box 1524, Poulsbo, WA 98370

The struggle for women is not over but the League is in the forefront of ensuring that women, men, and especially our children achieve progress on making democracy work for all.

Membership Levels:

_____ **\$60 Basic Membership: includes State and National Membership**

_____ **\$90 Household Membership: two or more at the same address**

_____ **\$110 Carrie Chapman Catt Membership (Founded LWV)***

_____ **\$160 Jo Huey Membership (First President of LWV-Kitsap)***

_____ **FREE Student Membership (with student ID)**

_____ **Scholarships - available upon request by contacting C. Larsen, membership (Dues assistance)**

***Includes membership plus donation to the LWV general fund.**

Carol Larsen, Membership Chair

Healthcare Committee

The Healthcare Committee looks forward to a busy year ahead for 2023-2024. **Our regular Zoom meeting on Friday, June 9th at 12:30PM will focus on planning for the year ahead.** There are many topics to be explored as we seek to understand the challenges to healthcare access in Kitsap County.

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If you want to learn more about gaps in comprehensive healthcare access, healthcare provider workforce challenges, availability of secular healthcare, Tricare reimbursement cuts that impact healthcare access and much more, join us on Zoom to prioritize our research in the months ahead as we prepare for a spring 2024 public presentation about solutions to the healthcare availability challenges in Kitsap County.

Contact Leni Skarin (leniskarin@gmail.com) if you would like to participate in the Healthcare Committee meetings this year.

Leni Skarin, Chair

Unit News

Bainbridge Island Unit

*The Bainbridge unit will have a **lunch gathering on Saturday, June 24th at the home of Delight Willing.** People are encouraged to bring a brown bag lunch for themselves, and Delight and Colette will provide drinks and dessert.*

The focus of the gathering will be making plans for the unit for next year. We have had interesting speakers in the past year, but turnout was very low, so this was evidently not what our unit members wanted. Or was the time wrong for the unit meetings?

A couple of suggestions that we have received are:

- 1) Have different members take responsibility for different unit meetings.*
- 2) Have the unit meetings focus on specific League topics in more depth than we have had in the past.*

What suggestions do you have? If you're not able to come on June 24th, please forward any ideas to us for discussion that day.

We hope that having this meeting on a Saturday in the middle of the day will bring more people out. And the special possible idea— if we have the blistering heat that is possibly projected—is that this could become a pool party! More information as we get closer to June 24th. We look forward to seeing you on June 24th with your good ideas.

Colette Crosby & Delight Willing, Co-Chairs

Bremerton/Central Kitsap Unit

Next Meeting: June 17th, 2023, 10AM – Noon

HYBRID: Kitsap United Way Conference room, 645 4th Street, Bremerton, and via Zoom.

Presenter: Jim Aho, Commissioner, Illahee Port Authority

Jim Aho is also a member of the Illahee Preserve Stewardship Committee and a board member of both the Illahee Forest Preserve and the Illahee Community group. Jim also volunteered to be an Illahee Citizen Advisory Group member and helped write the Illahee Community Plan.

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This all dovetails with our current interest in the *2024 Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan Update* and our next phase for the League's *Know Your County: Kitsap* report which includes the exploration of special service districts, like the port authority, that impact our quality of life in Kitsap County.

Resources:

- **WATCH: Illahee: Saving Puget Sound One Watershed at a Time**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2daqsligwol>
- **VISIT: Illahee Forest Preserve**
<http://illaheepreserve.org>
- **VISIT: Port of Illahee 2020 Comprehensive Plan**
https://www.portofillahee.com/?page_id=34
- **VISIT: Illahee Community Newsletter**
<https://www.illaheecommunity.com>
- **WATCH: Recording of May 10th CK Unit meeting with Eric Baker**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwHfUf0ogbM>

Eric Baker has also offered to arrange additional meetings at our request.

Bremerton/CK Unit monthly meetings are held on the 3rd Saturday, from 10AM to Noon. They are hybrid meetings held at Kitsap United Way Conference room (645 4th Street, Bremerton) and via Zoom. Questions? Contact Maureen Cervinsky at mcervinsky@gmail.com.

North Kitsap Unit

The North Kitsap Unit meeting was held Monday, May 22nd at the Poulsbo Library. As requested, we discussed upcoming candidate forums and reviewed the individuals who have filed for positions. We got an update from Susan Griggs on the North Kitsap School District issue of ongoing discrimination. We talked about the annual meeting and how enjoyable it was to see everyone and interact in-person once again.

We decided to have our annual potluck lunch in late August instead of an August meeting, venue to be announced. New member Amy Groetsch has already helped register students at North Kitsap High School along with Barbara Paul. Helen Hoover and Evie Schwerin were successful in registering students at Kingston High School. We agreed to have a June unit meeting to organize candidate forums prior to the primary election in August. Hands went up to volunteer for the forums. Great group of members!

Carol Larsen

South Kitsap Unit

The SK Unit meets the **second Tuesday** of the month at **10:30AM via Zoom**.

Contact: **Janet Stegemeyer, jans@oz.net, 360-471-9470.**

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Mark Your Calendar

Wed May 31, 2023

8:30AM to 1PM: County Commissioner Interviews

Where: Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82542719737>

Note: 45 minutes per interview with 15 min break in between. Interviews are conducted in an open public meeting. A random draw determined the order:

8:30 to 9:15 AM – Christine Rolfes

9:30 to 10:15 AM – Greg Nance

10:30 to 11:15 AM – Brynn Felix

11:30 to 12:15 PM – Executive Session

Sat June 3, 2023

10AM: LWVK Board Meeting

Where: Pearl on Oyster Bay, 550 Russell Rd, Bremerton, WA 98312

Tue June 13, 2023

10:30AM: SK Unit Meeting

Where: Zoom

Fri June 16, 2023

10:30AM: Voices of Kitsap: Suquamish Tribal Chairman Leonard Forsman

Where: Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82637765892>

Sat June 17, 2023

10AM: B/CK Unit Meeting

Where: Hybrid, Zoom and 645 4th Street, Bremerton, Kitsap Way United Conference room)

Sat June 24, 2023

Noon: Bainbridge Island Unit Meeting

Where: Delight Willing to host

*Note different day and time!

Tue July 11, 2023

10:30AM: SK Unit Meeting

Where: Zoom

Wed July 26, 2023

10:30AM: Bainbridge Island Unit Meeting

Where: Zoom

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