

## Press Release – PROTECTING WHAT WE HAVE WHILE WE GROW

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### PROTECTING WHAT WE HAVE WHILE WE GROW

The League of Women Voters of Comal Area invites residents to a panel discussion of current land use decisions being made in Comal County and the City of New Braunfels on Monday, February 8, at 7:00 p.m. at the GVTC Auditorium, 36101 FM 3159. As Comal County continues to grow, local governments are making decisions about land use that impact our daily lives and the ecosystem that we share. Among the many important decisions involving our area, LWV-CA has identified three issues on which to focus at this panel discussion.

The Outer Loop will be addressed by Rod Smith, an engineer and a member of the Outer Loop Task Force. The Task Force has been meeting for several months to review a study that was done by the Texas Department of Transportation regarding a loop around the City of New Braunfels. The Outer Loop as proposed would encompass unincorporated areas of Comal County and Guadalupe County. Mr. Smith will explain the background leading to the Outer Loop study and discuss the various issues being considered by the Task Force. He will also recommend possible alternatives as the City of New Braunfels considers options regarding the Outer Loop.

The second topic will be addressed by Comal County Commissioner Jay Millikin. He will describe the county's Regional Habitat Conservation Plan. This planning effort will preserve natural areas, conserve Comal County's endangered species, and help landowners comply with the federal Endangered Species Act. Commissioner Millikin will explain how this regional plan will work once it has been approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and how property owners may voluntarily become involved in this new process for our county.

Finally, Cherise Bell, City of New Braunfels' Historic Preservation Officer, will discuss the impacts of growth on historic structures in New Braunfels, and ways residents can protect historic buildings. She will also describe some of the threats growth poses to family farms, ranches, and cemeteries in Comal County.

There will be time for questions from the audience.

This February 8 meeting also coincides with the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of the founding of the League of Women Voters in the United States. President of LWV-Comal Area Roxanna Deane invites everyone to come enjoy a piece of birthday cake and added, "The League's mission is to inform and to encourage active participation of citizens in government. We hope this meeting will help residents become involved in government decisions that will impact all of us and our children for the next ninety years."