



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BikeWalkLee congratulates Fort Myers City Council for adopting new Complete Streets resolution

Fort Myers, FL (Oct. 4, 2011) –Yesterday, the Fort Myers City Council unanimously adopted a Complete Streets resolution initiating the process of planning and regulatory changes needed to establish a Complete Streets program.

The term “Complete Streets” refers to streets that adequately provide for all roadway users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists and transit riders of all ages, in an economically efficient manner. By definition, it acknowledges that streets have multiple users and functions. Implementing Complete Streets in Fort Myers will leverage the best integration of land use and transportation planning with a goal of safe, accessible connectivity community-wide with using multiple modes of transportation.

The City Council received emails and heard public commentary from a number of citizens in support of the resolution, including Sally Jackson of Lee Memorial Health Systems and Diane Holm of the Lee County Public Health Department reading a letter by Dr. Judith Hartner.

Fort Myers resident and young mother Cindy Banyai hopes with the passage of this resolution that “more consideration will now be given to people like her, wanting to hop on her bike with her daughter to safely enjoy all the amenities of Fort Myers.”

By adoption of a Complete Streets resolution, Fort Myers joins Lee County and more than 223 U.S. jurisdictions and 23 states in its commitment to the safety of its citizens. City Planning Manager Nicole Devaughn stated she “looks forward to the collaborative process of moving ahead with a Complete Streets program, now with the council’s full backing.”

With the goal of a safer walkable and bikeable community, this resolution initiates the integration of some of the city’s existing policies and plans, such as the 2004 Traffic Calming Plan, the 2007 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and the 2010 Fort Myers Comprehensive Plan. Coordinating current standalone plans and policies within a set of principles focused on safe access for all road users will ensure these concerns are addressed at the beginning of future planning efforts. Complete Streets improves planning, speeding project completion with less cost by putting local input and needs assessments at the beginning of the process, rather than at the end when changes are more costly.

The public’s return on investment is maximized by supporting a freer range of citizen transportation choices -- choices that reduce injuries or fatalities, lower health care costs, increase local business patronage and increase property values while creating the walkable and bikeable neighborhoods sought by tourists and those wanting to relocate to this area.

“Yesterday’s action by the Fort Myers City Council strengthens Lee County’s position as a leader within Southwest Florida in promoting sustainable/livable communities and Complete Streets,” said Darla Letourneau, a BikeWalkLee leader. “With the constellation of policies that the Metropolitan Planning Organization, Lee County

commissioners, and now the city council of Fort Myers have put in place, the county is moving in a new direction on transportation, land use planning and sustainability. BikeWalkLee is committed to working with the city and all parties in the county to make this vision a reality," Letourneau said.

BikeWalkLee is a community coalition raising public awareness and advocating for complete streets in Lee County—streets that are designed, built, operated and maintained for safe and convenient travel for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. For more information, visit www.BikeWalkLee.org, the BikeWalkLee blog at <http://bikewalklee.blogspot.com/>, or find us on Facebook and Twitter.

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