

# FACTS AND FIGURES:

## MAKING THE CASE FOR COMPLETE STREETS IN LEE COUNTY

### Safety:

- Close to 5,000 pedestrians and bicyclists die each year on U.S. roads, and more than 70,000 are injured.  
*[Mean Streets, Surface Transportation Policy Project, 2004.]*
- Nationally, while 9% of all trips are made by foot or bicycle, more than 13% of all traffic fatalities are bicyclists or pedestrians.  
*[Complete Streets: "Improve Safety for Everyone" fact sheet, 2008.]*
- Florida is ranked #1 in the nation for both bicycle and pedestrian fatalities per capita.
- Florida's bicycle fatality rate of 6.52 per million is almost three times the national average.
- Florida's pedestrian fatality rate of 2.19 per 100,000 is almost double the national average.  
*[National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)'s National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2007]*
- In 2007, 121 bicyclists and 530 pedestrians were killed in the Florida, with four bicyclists and 19 pedestrian deaths occurring in Lee County.  
*[A Safer FL: Traffic Crash Statistics Report 2007.]*
- Lee County's pedestrian fatality rate in 2007 was higher than the majority of other counties in the state, with a rate of 3.09 per 100,000.  
*[Office of Economic & Demographic Research, FL Legislature, 2008, from FDOT crash database.]*
- Lee County's bicyclist fatality rate in 2007 was the same as the state average, with a rate of 6.5 per million.  
*[Office of Economic & Demographic Research, FL Legislature, 2008, from FDOT crash database.]*
- Lee County has the 3rd highest Pedestrian Danger Index in America, according to the national Mean Streets Report. Lee County is more dangerous for pedestrians than Miami, Tampa, Jacksonville, or Orlando.  
*[Mean Streets Report compiled by the Surface Transportation Policy Project in 2004.]*
- In Lee County, school-age children are at a greater risk of being hit by a car while walking than in any other Florida county.  
*[U. of Miami study with 2005 data-- crash rate of 56 per 100,000 kids under 14.]*
- The most dangerous place to walk and bike are sprawling communities with streets built for motorists only. Pedestrian crashes are more than twice as likely to occur in places without sidewalks.  
*[Complete Streets "Improve Safety for Everyone" fact sheet 2008).]*

## **Mobility:**

- The national transportation system isn't giving Americans the options they want and need. Thirty percent of Americans do not drive, citing reasons of economics, age, disability and choice.  
*[Complete Streets Power Point(PP), 2007.]*
- Over 22% of Lee County's population is age 65 or over—higher than the national and Florida (17%) averages. This means that 131,105 Lee County residents are over 65, and an estimated 28,000 of these residents do not drive.  
*[U.S. Census Quick Facts, 2007.]*
- Recent opinion polls found that 52 percent of Americans want to bicycle more, and 55% would prefer to drive less and walk more.  
*[Complete Streets PowerPoint, 2007]*
- Nationally, 78% of all federal transportation dollars are spent on roads, with 20% on transit, and only 1.5% for walking and biking. However, in a national transportation poll done in 2007, Americans said that 22% of the transportation budget should go to walking and biking, and 41% for public transportation.  
*[Active Transportation for America report, 2008.]*
- Nearly half of all trips in the U.S. are three miles or less, and 28% are one mile or less, yet most of these trips are made by car.  
*[Complete Streets Fact Sheet, 2008.]*
- Many trips are made by car because it is too dangerous or unpleasant to walk, bike, or take transit. If safe and convenient facilities were available, many short trips could be made by walking or cycling.  
*[2001 NHTS Poll.]*
- A recent survey of Florida residents found only 25 percent felt it was safe to walk along or to cross their nearest U.S. or State road.  
*[Center for Urban Transportation Research, 2005, prepared for FDOT.]*
- Only 3.8% of Lee County residents use alternative means of transportation, compared to the 9.4% national average.  
*[Census 2007 American Community Survey.]*
- Public transit is only used by 1.2% of Lee County residents compared to 4.9% nationally.  
*[Census 2007 American Community Survey.]*

## **Physical Health:**

- The U.S. obesity epidemic results in 300,000 annual deaths and \$117 billion in health-related expenses nationwide. Florida's share is estimated to be \$3.9 billion.  
*[U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS), Surgeon General's Call to Action 2000.]*
- In Lee County, 64% of adults and 32% of children are overweight or obese.  
*[Lee Memorial Health System (LMHS) 2007 Community Health Assessment.]*

- In one generation, the percentage of children who walk or bike to school has dropped from 50% to 15%.  
*[Safe Routes to School National Partnership 2007]*
- During the same period, the childhood obesity rate tripled and the adolescent rate more than quadrupled.  
*[U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) 2004  
"Physical Activity, Health of Young People".]*
- Experts recommend 30 minutes of moderate physical activity 5 days a week, yet 55% of the U.S. adult population falls short of these recommended activity guidelines.  
*[HHS 2002 "Healthy People 2010".]*
- Integrating exercise into daily trips is an easy and fun way to meet this requirement.  
*[Rails-to-Trails: Making Case for Active Transportation]*
- It is estimated that close to 10 percent of all medical expenses in the U.S. are attributable to physical inactivity.  
*[Active Transportation for America 2007 report]*

### **Growth & Development:**

- Lee County's growth rate is one of the highest in Florida. While the average population growth in Florida was 14% from 2000 to 2007, Lee County grew at 34% during this period.  
*[U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts, 2008.]*
- Lee, Collier, and Charlotte counties are expected to be built-out before 2060, causing an almost continuous band of urban development along the southwest Florida coast.  
*[Florida 2060 report.]*
- Urban sprawl problems are exacerbated by the lack of a non-motorized transportation network in Lee County.
- Studies show that Complete Streets boost the economy by increasing property values.  
*[Complete Streets Economic Revitalization fact sheet, 2008.]*
- One study in Lake Worth, Florida found that people were willing to pay \$20,000 more for homes in pedestrian-friendly communities.  
*[Florida Sustainable Communities Network, October 1998.]*
- It is much more costly to go back and retrofit a road with sidewalks, pedestrian crossings and bicycle lanes than it is to build the roads with these features the first time.  
*[Safe Routes to School 2009 Policy Report.]*
- In Lee County, we have numerous examples of the added cost of retrofits to deal with incompletely designed facilities.
- Sidewalks on U.S. 41 north of Daniels Parkway were not included as part of the previous widening projects or when the developments were approved, and as a result, the MPO is now spending \$4.9 million to design and build sidewalks. The

cost to build them with the original projects would have been about \$584,000 (present day costs).

- The new Sanibel toll plaza did not include bicycle facilities in the design. As a result, it is now scheduled to be retrofitted at a cost over \$500,000.

### **Economic Impacts:**

- Bicycling generates \$133 billion in U.S. economic activity annually, twice the impact of recreational fishing. It supports approximately 1.1 million jobs.  
*[League of American Bicyclists.]*
- American consumers bought 19.8 million bicycles in 2005—4.4 million more than all the cars and trucks purchased that year.  
*[National Bicycle Dealers Association, Bureau of Transportation Statistics.]*
- Bike and pedestrian projects generate 65 jobs per \$1 million spent vs. 42 jobs per \$1 million for traditional road projects.  
*[League of American Bicyclists, 2009.]*
- An investment in bicycling generates jobs and economic return. For example, the North Carolina DOT reports a 9:1 return on investment on biking facilities in the Outer Banks.  
*[NCDOT, Division of bike/ped transportation, 2004.]*
- Traffic congestion is a significant drain on the economy; the national cost in 2007 was estimated to be \$78 billion.
- For each commuting American, this equals 38 hours in traffic or \$710/year.  
*[Texas Transportation Institute, Urban Mobility Report, 2007.]*
- For many workers, safe and accessible alternate transportation options are essential to enable them to get and keep jobs.
- Commuting by bicycle is significantly cheaper: The average annual operating cost of a bicycle is \$308, 2.25% that of an average car (\$13,646).  
*[Bike cost from Moritz, W.: Survey of North American Bicycle Commuters, 1997; and car cost from National Household Travel Survey, 2001.]*
- Biking and hiking (the top two most popular outdoor activities, according to the Outdoor Industry Foundation), are obvious components of any ecotourism effort, since visitors who want to get in touch in nature will likely be happy to do that by walking or biking.
- J.N. "Ding" Darling Wildlife Refuge touts its bike-access to potential visitors, and Lee County Visitors and Convention Bureau includes biking and walking offerings in its online information.

### **Environmental Health:**

- Florida's transportation-related carbon emissions contribute 46% of the greenhouse gas emissions in Florida (compared to 33% nationally); with 66% of these emissions in Florida coming from cars.  
*[Florida's Energy and Climate Change Action Plan: 2007; and national data from Active Transportation Report, 2008.]*

- The Fort Myers/Cape Coral metro area’s carbon footprint is among the highest of the 100 metro areas in the U.S.
- The largest source of Lee County’s carbon emissions is from automobile use. We rank 95<sup>th</sup>, i.e., only 5 metro areas in the nation have worse per capita carbon emissions caused by automobiles.

*[Brookings Institute Report, 2008—Shrinking the Carbon Footprint of Metropolitan America.]*

- The transportation sector is the fastest growing carbon dioxide source in the U.S., with emission rates rising 2% per year. Driving is projected to increase by 59 percent between now and 2030.

*[Smart Growth American study “Growing Cooler”, 2007.]*

- If Lee County residents replaced just 1 car trip with 1 bike trip each month, the county could cut carbon emissions by 22,208 tons/per year.

*]Calculated for Lee County based on: Complete Streets Benefits, 2005.]*

- Ten percent of global oil production goes toward fueling America’s cars and trucks. If the U.S. doubled its trips by bike, Americans could save more than 693 million gallons of gas—more than \$5 billion each year.

*[U.S. Representative Blumenauer(OR) letter 2/23/09]*

### **Quality of Life:**

- Half of all non-drivers age 65 and over stay home on a given day because they lack transportation, which lessens their independence and quality of life.

*[Surface Transportation Policy Partnership. Aging Americans: Stranded without Options, 2004.]*

- Seniors are more likely to rely upon alternative transportation, such as walking or public transit. A recent survey by AARP found significant support for complete streets policies among older Americans.

*[AARP Poll, August 13, 2008.]*

- Complete streets improve equity by providing accessible transportation choices for children, the elderly, and the disabled and low-income populations.
- A safe and accessible bike and pedestrian transportation network is the foundation for safe, livable communities. When people get out of their cars, there is more human interaction, more awareness of community conditions, and a better sense of community. When destinations are easy to reach by bike and foot, our neighborhoods are more welcoming.

*[National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL): Encouraging Bicycling and Walking, 2008.]*

*BikeWalkLee: 4/24/09*