

Why does Lee County need a complete streets policy?

- **Complete streets improve safety.** The Federal Highways Administration safety review found that streets designed with complete street features improve safety for all users. This is important to Lee County because we have some of the highest bike and pedestrian fatality per capita rates in the country.
- **Complete streets are sustainable.** The potential to reduce carbon emissions by shifting trips to lower carbon modes is undeniable. This is important to Lee County because we have one of the largest carbon footprints per capita from automobile use in the country (among the 100 largest metro areas). We need more transportation alternatives, not less. Only 3.8% of county residents use alternative means of transportation to commute to work, compared to the 9.4% national average. We need ways to get around that don't rely on cars alone. We need to encourage the healthy lifestyles choices that include biking and walking. We need to recognize that we live in an area whose growth rate makes better mass transit essential, not just a luxury.
- **Complete streets foster strong communities.** Complete streets play an important role in livable communities. A safe walking and bicycling environment is an essential part of improving public transportation and creating friendly, walkable communities. This is important to Lee County because the county continues its urban sprawl growth pattern, which is exacerbated by the lack of a non-motorized transportation network. Complete streets provide benefits to the community in many ways, from public health to sustainability and from improved property values and economic revitalization to increased capacity and improved mobility for all.
- **It saves taxpayers money.** When these elements are designed in, they cost very little. When they have to be added later, they cost a lot -- and we have to foot the bill. In Lee County, we have numerous examples of the added cost of retrofits to deal with incompletely designed facilities. Without a complete streets policy, bicycle, pedestrian and public transportation accommodations are often debated too late in the design process, which creates expensive design revisions. The careful planning encouraged by complete streets policies requires minimal to zero additional funding. Implementing complete streets allows for an efficient and optimal use of limited resources: time, fuel, land, public health, the environment and money.