

Annual accomplishments

BikeWalkLee website: www.bikewalklee.org

2013

BikeWalkLee is a volunteer 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.

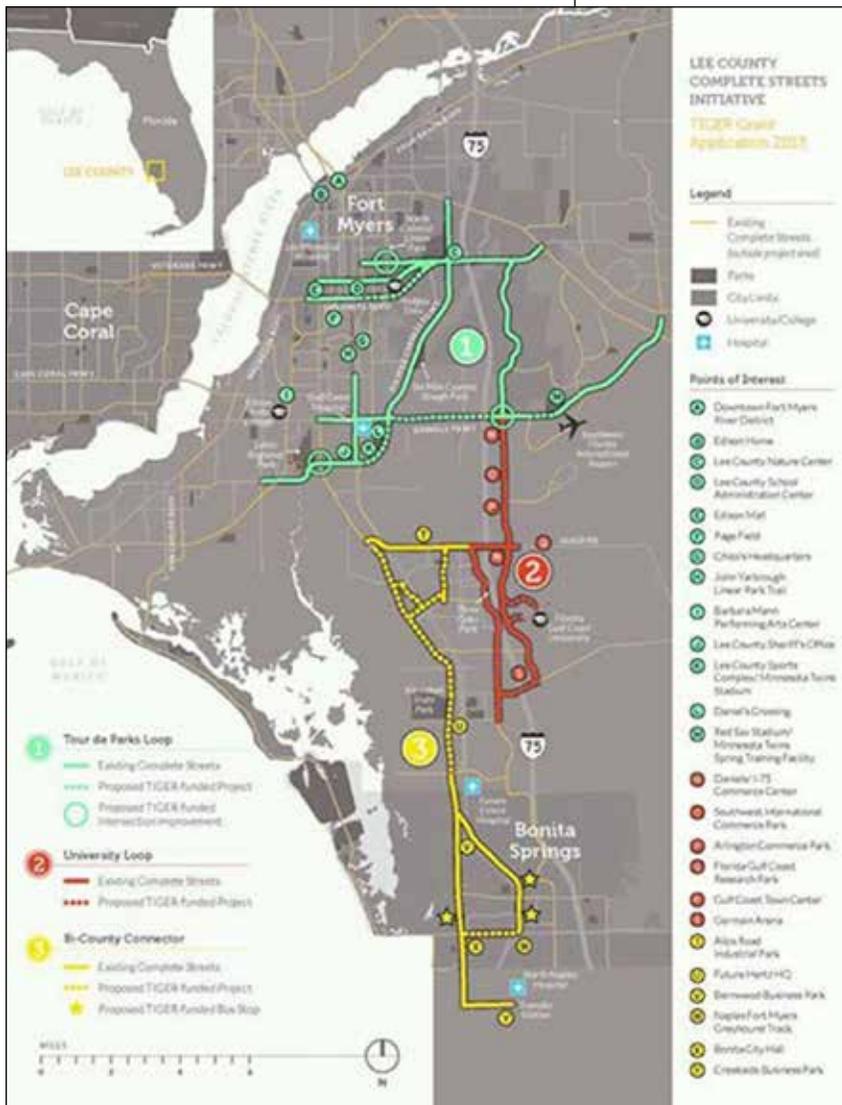
Its vision is for Lee County to become a “complete streets” model community whose integrated and safe cycling and walking network inspires people of all ages, income groups and fitness levels to cycle and walk for transportation and recreation, and where public transportation is available and accessible to citizens and visitors alike.



“It is great opportunity for Lee County to be a part of this [the federal TIGER grant award for Lee MPO complete streets initiative project]. ... It will provide for a better and safer community while allowing an opportunity for exercising and recreational activity. I applaud the efforts of Bike Walk Lee in bringing this about... in making this grant opportunity possible.”

— Lee County Commission Chairman Cecil Pendergrass at TIGER grant press conference, Sept. 5, 2013

Lee County Complete Streets Initiative federal TIGER grant map



BikeWalkLee was formed in 2009, with many accomplishments in its first five year, including adoption of complete streets policies and a countywide bicycle and pedestrian master plan and safety action plan. Two over-arching and related themes for BikeWalkLee in 2013 were the TIGER grant and bike/ped safety. This report highlights BWL's 2013 accomplishments and closes with its 2014 priorities.

TIGER grant

The Lee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was successful in winning a \$10.4 million federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant for its Complete Streets initiative project, initiated and championed by BikeWalkLee since 2011. BikeWalkLee assisted in the application preparation and gathered letters of support from an impressive list of 55 community leaders and organizations.

The grant will close gaps along the Tour de Parks route, the University Loop, and the Bi-County Connector, as envisioned in the MPO's bike/ped master plan, and includes new bike/ped facilities, bus shelters and other improvements and amenities.

U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary Anthony Foxx announced the grant at a press conference in Fort Myers, calling it an investment in safety, community, mobility, and transportation choice.

BikeWalkLee was honored to be invited to speak at the Secretary's press conference, highlighting the opportunity to use this success to leverage future action to increase economic development, lifestyle choice and improve the safety of our roadways for pedestrians and cyclists.

The TIGER grant is the culmination of all the building-block efforts throughout the county BikeWalkLee has been involved in over the past five years, from the complete streets policies to the countywide bike/ped master plan and safety action plan.

Winning the grant demonstrates the success and rewards that can come from doing business in a new way — collaboration and teamwork across jurisdictions, agencies, organizations, disciplines, private-public sector partnerships, addressing problems in a holistic way, and truly engaging citizens in shaping their communities.

■ Lee's TIGER grant was highlighted in national media as example of how TIGER grants can transform smaller American

cities for the better, and specifically mentioning BikeWalkLee's role in bringing this about. "If change can happen in Lee County, Florida, it can happen anywhere, as long as advocates are organized and persistent, and outlets like TIGER empower local communities to make forward-looking decisions." (DC.Streetsblog, Sept. 11, 2013.)

- Advocated for MPO Board leadership in TIGER implementation, with monthly reports now instituted.

Bike/ped safety campaign

Closely tied to the TIGER grant is the MPO's Bike/Ped Safety Action Plan, aimed at greatly reducing bike/ped injury and fatality crashes through a wide-range of recommended activities, from education, engineering to enforcement.

- BikeWalkLee participated in the development of the Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (BPSAP) in conjunction with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and a broad array of local stakeholders, beginning in 2012 and culminated in MPO Board adoption in September 2013.

- BikeWalkLee was invited to participate in USDOT Secretary's April bike safety summit in Tampa, with Lee County's complete streets effort being showcased as a way to improve safety.

- BikeWalkLee assisted in getting wide media coverage of this Tampa safety summit, providing an opportunity to educate the public about bike/ped safety.

- BikeWalkLee was part of a coalition of local agencies and stakeholders that partnered with FDOT on its "Alert Today, Alive Tomorrow" bike/ped safety campaign, targeting Lee County as one of the 10 most dangerous counties in the state with the goal of identifying potential interventions to change the behavior of all road users to improve safety. BWL prepared a resource book for the May media event and conducted media outreach, resulting in extensive coverage by the local media.

- BikeWalkLee wrote a report on lessons learned from the Tampa summit, which was widely disseminated and used to strengthen the MPO's bike/ped safety action plan before it was finalized. BWL successfully advocated for setting quantitative targets to reduce bike/ped fatality and injury rates and holding everyone accountable for results.

- Collaborated with MPO and other partners in implementation of the BPSAP, and helped facilitate the first-ever meeting of all local law enforcement leaders, a first



Partners in Lee County Complete Streets TIGER project (from left): Lee County Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass, FDOT District 1 Secretary Billy Hattaway, FGCU's Steve Magiera, BikeWalkLee's Darla Letourneau, Sanibel Mayor and MPO Chair Kevin Ruane, MPO Executive Director Don Scott, Sustainability Program Manger Tessa LeSage, and LeeTran Director Steve Meyers.

Public workshop for development of MPO's Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Action Plan.





FDOT's "Alert Today, Alive Tomorrow" tent at Tice Elementary School during May 9th Tice walking audit and FDOT's bike/ped safety initiative press conference.

step in an education and enforcement campaign.

- Collaborated with Stay Alive, Just Drive!, AARP of Florida, Florida Bicycling Association and many other organizations for the third year in support of state legislation to ban texting while driving, which was supported by the entire Lee Legislative Delegation and finally enacted by the Florida Legislature, signed by the Governor, and went into effect in September 2013.

- Testified at Lee Legislative delegation in December 2013 to strengthen the texting ban legislation and oppose proposals to increase speeds on FL roads in the upcoming 2014 legislative session.

- Joined other advocates to urge national leaders to set specific performance goals for reducing the number of bicyclists and pedestrians killed on our roadways (as part of USDOT's upcoming MAP-21 performance measures regulations) to ensure that states are held accountable for results.

- Urged FDOT to focus its federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds (which doubled in MAP-21) on bike/ped safety projects as part of its statewide campaign to reduce bike/ped fatalities in Florida.

Coalition building and consensus seeking

A strong coalition is the strength of this organization and the reason behind its numerous accomplishments. Partnered across sectors with a growing number of community stakeholders that want to improve the quality of life and mobility in Lee County. Partners include Florida Gulf Coast University, health care organizations, safety prevention groups, AARP of Florida, citizen and community groups, environmental organizations, planners and sustainable communities groups, and bike clubs and shops.

- Broadened coalition from 51 to 57 members including the Foundation for Lee County Public Schools; Urban Land Institute of Southwest Florida; the Southwest Florida Watershed Council; two disability groups — Southwest Florida Council of the Blind and Center for Independent Living/Gulf Coast; BikeWalk Central Florida; along with two new bike shops.

- Continued service on executive steering committee for Healthy Lee Coalition whose goals include expanding support for complete streets to promote healthy lifestyles and fight obesity.

- Supported Healthy Lee Coalition's successful first signature event Streets Alive!, opening the downtown Fort Myers streets for people to play traffic-free, and bringing the first "open streets/cyclvia" event to Lee County. BikeWalkLee's booth provided an opportunity for participants to join the community conversation about making our neighborhoods more livable.

"They've [BikeWalkLee] managed to work well with government....And not just work well with government, but work government — break it in, saddle it up and ride it hard — to change both the concept of how we live and move around, and the pavement on which we live and move around."

— May 22, 2013, *Florida Weekly* article: "BikeWalkLee rakes in awards by spurring awareness, action" by Roger Williams

■ Continued our public education/outreach campaign by partnering with *News-Press* and *Florida Weekly*, publishing a series of articles, editorials and commentaries on topics on bike/ped/transit issues.

■ BikeWalkLee's biweekly column in the *News-Press*' "Go Coastal" section is increasing visibility for BWL and its mission, with a reach of 432,000 readers weekly. BWL articles focused on some of the groups, events and opportunities that make our area a better place to walk, run, bike and try transit; and to educate the community about the benefits of complete streets.

■ Dan Moser's biweekly column in *Florida Weekly* focuses on bike/ped issues with BWL advocacy updates. *Florida Weekly* has a reach of 180,000 readers weekly.

■ Supported community efforts in 2011 and 2012 to improve safety at two intersections — Burton Park in Cape Coral and Briarcliff Road in south Lee County, with new traffic signals being installed in 2013.

■ Partnered with Lee County, Florida Gulf Coast University, FDOT, the City of Fort Myers, the Tice Historic Community and the Project for Public Spaces (through EPA grant) for a two-day walking audit in Tice to improve community engagement and livability. The successful community engagement resulted in the identification of dangerous bike/ped conditions and a prioritized list for improvements. BWL wrote a commentary, published in the *News-Press*, about the importance of the citizen-led community improvement effort.

■ Initiated a new series of BWL "show and tell" bike rides for local officials, staff, and committees to show them the "good, bad, and the ugly" of the county's bike/ped facilities, providing them with first-hand experience with which to make decisions on bike/ped matters. Since March 2013, seven rides were conducted along the Tour de Parks route, downtown Fort Myers, and Cape Coral, with over 90 individual participants, including elected and appointed officials from both city and county government as well as FDOT. These rides will continue in 2014, focusing on specific elective bodies and agencies.

■ Collaborated with many public interest and community groups such as Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL), Responsible Growth Management Coalition (RGMC), and League of Women Voters (LWV), and local community panels in opposition to the proposed 2013 suspension of impact fees for roads, schools and parks. The Lee County Commission voted to reduce the



BikeWalkLee's Darla Letourneau and TIGER mascot Kelly Bishop celebrate the TIGER grant at Lee County's inaugural Streets Alive event in downtown Fort Myers Nov. 10.

BikeWalkLee's "pop-up city hall" was popular among participants at the Streets Alive event.



“We’ve incorporated things in our master planning today that would not exist had it not been for this group’s activities and their influence.... In years to come, this will be a better-blended community from a transportation standpoint, because of the efforts of BikeWalkLee.”

— Lee County Commissioner Frank Mann

Commissioner Frank Mann leads the way on one of BikeWalkLee’s “show and tell” bike rides in May on the Tour de Parks route, accompanied by Fort Myers Mayor Randy Henderson and two other city council members, along with city and county staff.



impact fees by 80% for two years, resulting in reduced funds for transportation, park, and school projects.

- Partnered with the American Planning Association and Reconnecting Lee to sponsor a presentation featuring innovative and award winning roadway design and stormwater management utilized in building Honore Boulevard in Sarasota. The workshop was attended by over 75 public and private professionals.

- Joined the STEM Committee of the Foundation for Lee County Public Schools in 2013 at invitation of the foundation, opening an opportunity to have a dialogue with the education community and students about complete streets, improved bike/ped safety, and transportation choices.

- Partnered with eight national coalitions and associations that provide BikeWalkLee with valuable national information and strategic advice and a network of national advocates. Participated in dozens of national webinars and mutual aid calls to keep up-to-date on national policy developments and to learn “best practices” from other communities around the country. Attended the first-ever national walking summit held in DC this fall, linking the organization with walking advocates and experts around the country.

Government policies and funding

BikeWalkLee is active in the various planning arenas in Lee County, including the Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Lee County BoCC, and local jurisdictions that influence transportation policy. Because land use and transportation are inextricably entwined and ultimately impact all aspects of individual choice in quality of life, BWL pursues the goal of ensuring that gains in one arena are reflected in the other, and that they reinforce each other in a way that betters the entire county.

In 2013, BikeWalkLee worked with a broad set of agencies and stakeholders to support the following initiatives:

- Complete Streets policies & implementation
- Lee County sustainability planning & strategies
- Lee County Horizon 2035 plan and Lee Plan amendments
- Successful completion of construction of many bike/ped projects throughout Lee County
- Increased funding for bike/ped facilities

- MPO Bike/Ped master plan
- Lee MPO Transportation Planning and 2040 LRTP
- Advocacy for improved transit services
- Advocacy for bike tourism
- Advocacy at the federal and state levels
- Collaboration with local jurisdictions

Complete Streets policies & implementation

■ In 2013, Lee County's complete streets policy was highly rated in the National Complete Streets Coalition (NCSC)'s annual report, "The Best Complete Streets Policies of 2012." It was ranked the second strongest among 32 complete streets communities in Florida, with especially strong marks for its implementation plan.

■ In the 2013 book, "Completing our Streets: The Transition to Safe and Inclusive Transportation Networks" by Complete Streets founder Barbara McCann, Lee County's complete streets efforts are one of the examples of how thinking ahead can save money, highlighting the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) amendments in 2012 that saved an estimated \$59 million by shifting five road projects to complete street/road diet designs.

■ Continued to educate the public, as well as new officials and staff, about complete streets and what it means for citizens of Lee County through briefings of officials, staff, and committees; presentations to community groups; our biweekly columns in the *News-Press*, and in published commentaries, our blog posts, and newsletters and attendance at multiple public events.

■ BikeWalkLee representatives serve on the Complete Streets Working Group of the county's Community Sustainability Advisory Committee (CSAC) to collaborate with county staff on complete streets implementation.

■ In March 2013, the county's 2012 Complete Streets Implementation Report (with input from BWL and the CSAC) was presented to county commissioners and BWL provided its assessment of the most important accomplishments.

■ Reviewed the Capital Infrastructure Program (CIP) and provided recommendations to the CSAC, the Local Planning Agency (LPA), and the Lee County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC), with a focus on making the CIP more consistent with fiscal realities and the county's sustainability and complete streets goals. Both the LPA and the CSAC made recommendations to BoCC consistent with BWL's



BikeWalkLee's key factoid infogram developed for the Streets Alive event, highlighting the progress made to date in making Lee County a more bike/ped-friendly place.



“I noticed on the BikeWalkLee blog that you are doing a great job integrating existing work into future Complete Street models. What a big step forward for future planning. ...It has been a great help to have your support throughout this process.... thank you for your leadership on such an innovative program.”

— Broward County Mayor Kristin Jacobs
May 16, 2013, letter to BikeWalkLee
about complete streets collaboration
between counties

More than 75 people participated in the Office of Sustainability’s public workshop in March to help prioritize goals for the county’s first sustainability plan.



recommendations. BWL and the two committees recommended that the Estero Blvd. improvement project be the #1 priority, which was endorsed by the BoCC; however, the BoCC moved forward with also prioritizing the Alico Road expansion project (although on slower schedule) counter to the recommendations of BWL and both committees.

- Continued to review resurfacing contract projects and identified dozens of opportunities to address the needs of all users, increasing safety and choice, when the roads are resurfaced (such as road diets, share the road signs, improved crosswalks, reduced speed limits). In 2013, these projects were prioritized for consideration in upcoming CIPs, and BWL is tracking to ensure these projects are incorporated in future CIPs.

- Continued to monitor road projects under development to ensure bike/ped/transit accommodations are planned and built at the front-end of the process.

- Gave testimony at the BoCC April public hearing on its Pine Island golf cart ordinance, which was consistent with BikeWalkLee’s 2012 policy statement and 2013 letter to the BoCC. The ordinance prohibits golf carts on bike/ped facilities due to safety concerns.

Lee County sustainability planning & strategies

- Participated in the county’s development of its Sustainability Plan, which incorporates the principles of complete streets. This Plan is an important road map for Lee County in achieving stability through balance in economy, environment, and social equity.

- Participated in public workshop in the spring, spoke in support of the Plan at the BoCC workshop in December, and working with a broad range of community organizations urging the BoCC to adopt the plan in early 2014.

Lee County Horizon 2035 plan and Lee Plan amendments

- Continued to work to ensure that the principles of complete streets and a balanced multi-modal transportation system that supports livable and sustainable communities in Lee County are incorporated into the amendments to the Lee Plan (the county’s comprehensive land use plan).

- Participated in County committee deliberations (both the LPA and CSAC) on various Lee Plan elements, providing comments and specific recommendations on key

elements. BWL promoted community participation in the Horizon 2035 process through its communication network.

- Advocated for a shift from road impact fees to a mobility fee system that would support multi-modal transportation investments and promote infill and redevelopment and more fairly shift the costs of new growth to areas requiring significant investment of public infrastructure.

- Successful completion of construction of many bike/ped projects throughout Lee County

- During the summer, LeeDOT completed the second demonstration loop identified in the MPO bike/ped master plan — the 8.7 mile University Loop which links FGCU to area destinations. LeeDOT installed bike lane markings and wayfinding signs, and developed a route map. BWL promoted the new route through its columns and communications network.

Increased funding for bike/ped facilities

With BWL's sustained involvement and advocacy, the Lee MPO continues to increase the bike/ped mode share of their funding request to FDOT. In 2013, an additional \$9.8 million was provided for bike/ped projects in the FDOT five-year work plan.

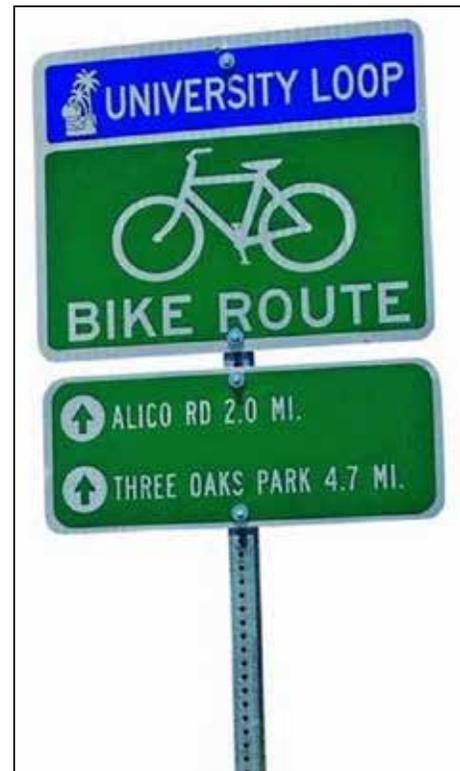
Included are funds for several BWL priority projects: two regional enhancement projects (Abel Canal and study for the 10-Mile Linear extension); study for Winkler Canal/Fort Myers shared use path (remaining demo project from MPO master plan); and funds for bike/ped master plan development in both Cape Coral and Fort Myers Beach.

- The MPO's Bike/Ped Coordinating Committee (BPCC) also included two of BWL's priority projects in its list of bike/ped projects recommended to FDOT for federal funding for next year — sidewalks around Tice Elementary School (a follow-up from the Tice walking audit), and a planning study for a pathway to connect Cape Coral to the existing path system on Pine Island.

- As a result of the combined complete streets implementation efforts, LeeDOT's budget for the coming year includes significant funds for complete streets projects and bike/ped facilities. Over the five-year work plan, \$25 million is budgeted for stand-alone bike/ped projects (up from \$20 million last year), and all road projects planned for the upcoming five years also include bike/ped facilities.

- BikeWalkLee's top funding priority for the CIP, the Estero Blvd. improvement project in Fort Myers Beach, was approved by the BoCC, with an increase of \$7.75 million moved up to expedite the project during the 5-year work plan. This project will provide much needed sidewalks and bike lanes and improved transit to make it safer for all road users.

- The new Fiddlesticks Blvd. shared use path, championed by the community and BWL and approved last year, will be designed in 2014 and constructed in 2015.



The University Loop was completed in 2013, with wayfinding signs all along the 8.7-mile loop that connects Florida Gulf Coast University to area destinations.

“...In my book, BikeWalkLee holds the highest standard for how to organize and achieve great things... Keep up the great work.”

— April 4, 2013, note from Bill Clark, AARP of Florida



North Estero Blvd. on Fort Myers Beach, completed in 2011 and reviewed in 2012 by BWL, is a model complete street.

MPO bike/ped master plan

- Focused on implementation for the new MPO countywide bike/pedestrian master plan with the goal of effectively connecting and integrating bicycle and pedestrian travel on the county's transportation system.

- Participated in BPCC's overhaul of its bike/ped project prioritization criteria and process to align it with the 2011 countywide bike/ped master plan and MAP-21 performance measures and provisions.

- Worked with MPO staff and BPCC on production of countywide bicycle facilities map (first update since 2007) in early 2013, with twin goals of identifying biking routes for cyclists and identifying gaps in the current biking

infrastructure for bike advocates and planners. BWL assists in the wide distribution of the maps and promoted its availability through its columns and communications network.

- Continued to assist the MPO's Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee (BPCC) in expanding the focus of committee and keeping it focused on oversight of implementation of the master plan, while engaging the new players, including representatives from tourism, health, law enforcement, and citizen advocates.

Lee MPO transportation planning and 2040 LRTP

BWL is deeply engaged in Lee MPO work, from the Board meetings to the committee meetings. BWL members participate in MPO committee meetings, both as committee members and as citizen attendees, and regularly speak at MPO board meetings on agenda topics, as well as bringing new trends, research, and lessons from other communities to the board, including new fiscal realities, safety strategies, etc.

- Followed through on two resolutions initiated by BWL and adopted by the MPO board in December 2010 as part of their 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), that provided concrete action steps to ensure that the LRTP promotes a more balanced multi-modal system, including focusing on a "fix it first" approach; and the use of improving modeling techniques, such as scenario planning, performance measures, and improved public outreach tools, and enhanced transit.

- Worked with MPO staff and Executive Committee to:

- Improve the estimates of revenues, maintenance costs, population and traffic projections to ensure that planning model is realistic.



- Structure the 2040 LRTP process to focus on living within available resources, ensuring that the highest priority projects are the focus, right-sizing projects to do most good at least cost.

- MPO is now implementing these policy steps as it prepares for the 2040 LRTP development. BWL has participated in and spoken in support of all of these initiatives, including land use scenarios analysis and rail feasibility study recommendations.

- BWL partnered with the MPO staff to organize the Peer-to-Peer exchanges to learn from other communities' experiences as the Board embarks on the development of its 2040 LRTP. Presentations were made by the Nashville MPO, the Sarasota Honore Blvd. project team, and the Broward MPO, sparking productive discussions with the Lee MPO Board about lessons for Lee County as it develops the 2040 LRTP and tries to shifts to a new transportation paradigm.

- The Lee MPO's successful efforts were recognized as the 2013 Injury Prevention Organization of the Year for its continuing support of complete streets, the development of the first countywide bike/ped safety action plan, and for winning the prestigious TIGER grant for its complete streets initiative. In addition, the Lee MPO Executive Director was named the 2013 Florida Bicycle Association's (FBA) Support Agency of the Year award for making bike/ped access and safety a priority.

Advocacy for improved transit services

In spite of continuing record-breaking increases in ridership, LeeTran faced budget cutbacks in 2013. BWL played a key role, along with other supporter organizations and community partners, including groups working on behalf of the disabled, in advocating for the continuation of the Route 60 bus route which serves FGCU, and in arguing against proposed cutbacks in evening service hours. In the final budget, BoCC retained the Route 60 route, but cut evening services in half, resulting in some waits of two hours between buses.

- Advocated for the restoration of the transit service cuts, which have already resulted in reduction in ridership which are creating hardships, especially for service workers, and are putting the functional efficacy of our transit system at risk.

- Supported the LinC connection between Collier County and Bonita Springs. With grant funding ending in the fall of 2014, BWL is working with the Lee and Collier MPOs, LeeTran, BoCC, and Bonita Springs, urging all parties to come to the table as soon as possible to find a solution to keep this popular bus route in place next year.

- Served as a member of the county's Transit Task Force. BikeWalkLee is part of effort to develop a longer range plan for



Broward County's MPO Executive Director Greg Stuart makes a presentation to the Lee MPO Board in September as part of its Peer-to-Peer Exchange program.

Florida Bicycle Association's Dan Moser presents the FBA award to Lee MPO Executive Director Don Scott, named the 2013 FBA Support Agency of the Year.





sustainable funding for transit services and expanded services as envisioned in the 2035 LRTP.

Advocacy for bike tourism

- Successfully initiated a new focus on bike tourism as economic development.

- Asked Lee Legislative Delegation to grow Florida’s economy through a focused strategy on bike tourism, and to support funding for the “Coast to Coast Connector” trail.

- Continued to partner with the Naples Pathways Coalition and Friends of River of Grass Greenway in support of the River of Grass Greenway, a planned pathway through the Everglades parallel to U.S. 41 between Naples and Miami, approx. 75 miles.

- Issued an extensive report, “Bike Tourism: Recommendations for Lee Visitors Convention Bureau (VCB)’s draft 2013-2016 Strategic Plan,” outlining the national trends, the local actions and improvements that have been made in Lee County to position us for bike tourism, along with specific recommendations for the VCB strategic plan.

- Collaborated with VCB to launch the beginnings of a new VCB webpage on biking and walking opportunities. Also partnered with VCB to launch a “Pedal to the Park” initiative to promote biking to the upcoming baseball spring training games.

- Promoted bike tourism through developing and widely distributing to media outlets and others a guide (maps and stories) to biking resources in Lee County, and used BWL column to share information with larger universe.

- Partnering with Cape Coral Bike-Ped to promote the tourism value of the new 90 miles of cycling routes in Cape Coral, with route signs being installed in 2013-2014.

Advocacy at the federal and state levels

- Developed strong partnership with FDOT District 1 Secretary Billy Hattaway in support of bike/ped safety, a balanced multi-modal transportation system, promotion of innovative approaches such as roundabouts, road diets, and the integration of land use and transportation planning. Secretary Hattaway was named FBA’s 2013 Bicycle Professional of the Year for his leadership efforts to improve bike/ped safety throughout Florida. BWL has consistently advocated for a statewide complete streets policy and program since inception in 2009. This year, FDOT announced that it is developing a complete streets policy and guidance in support of the policy, a significant accomplishment that is part of its commitment to improve bike/ped safety.

- Collaborated with national advocacy partners to track implementation of MAP-21 in Florida, and urged national leaders to set specific performance goals for reducing the number of bicyclists and pedestrians killed on our roadways (as part of USDOT’s upcoming MAP-21 performance measures regulations) to ensure that states are held accountable for results.

“Often bike advocacy groups are just the athletes, but BikeWalkLee joins little-old-lady cyclists like me who like to ride around without spandex, to the athletes. It connects the 8-year-olds and the 80-year-olds. And they’ve combined that with advocacy for public transportation, across the board... [and] they’ve managed to work well with government.”

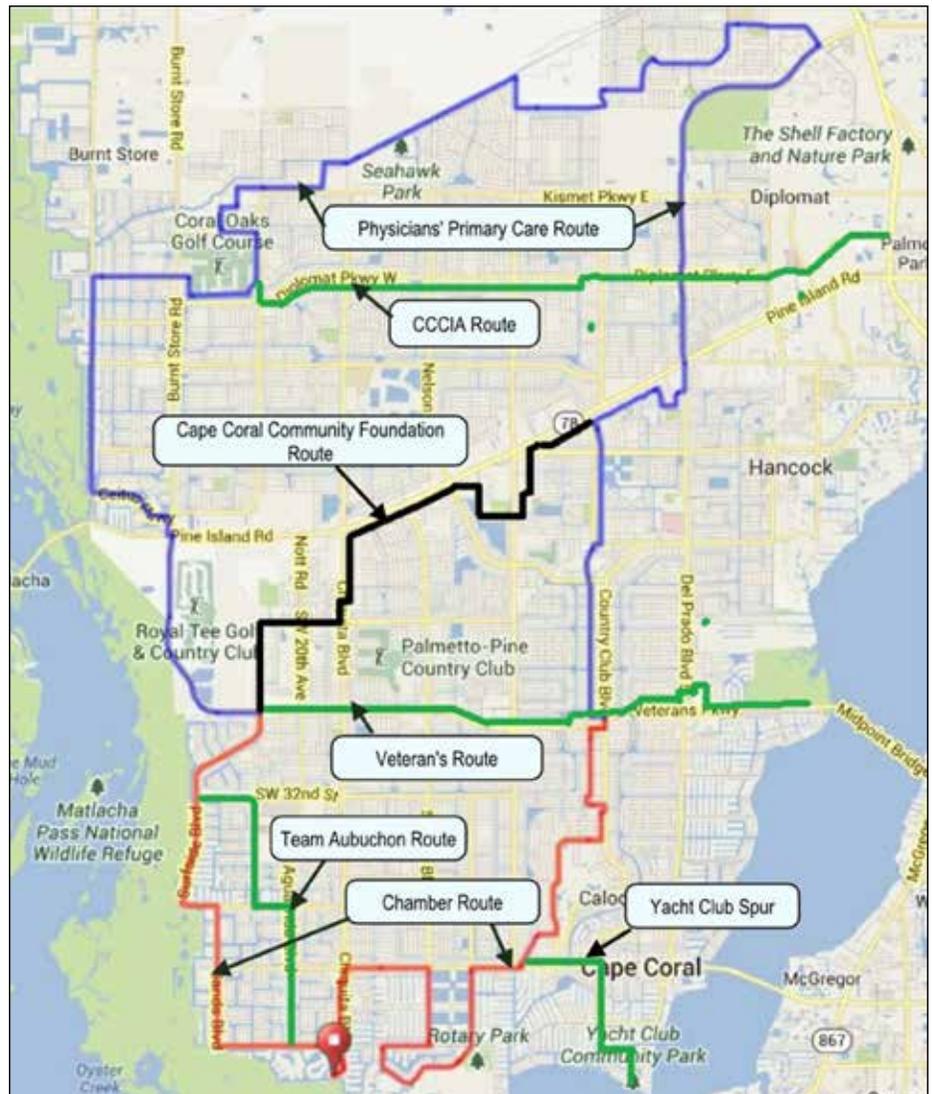
— Bill Spikowski, president of Spikowski Planning & Associates

Collaboration with local jurisdictions

BikeWalkLee has forged strong working relationships with elected officials and staff in all five independent municipalities in the county, with assistance from local BWL representatives in each jurisdiction, which has strengthened the countywide efforts to make progress on complete streets. BWL representatives serve on the bike/ped advisory committees/safety committees/community panels, and advocacy organizations in their respective jurisdictions. This year BWL recognized the significant advances being achieved by Lee County's cities to make our communities more bikeable and walkable through its Complete Streets Champions of the Year awards.

Cape Coral: In December, the City of Cape Coral and Cape Coral Bike-Ped (CCBP) received BWL's 2013 Complete Streets Champion of the Year award for its innovative public/private partnership to create a safe and connected system of more than 90 miles of cycling routes within the City. CCBP raised the funds to support the effort from 70 organizations, and started installing the route signs in November, with all route signage to be completed in 2014. BWL works closely with CCBP to support and publicize their efforts, and are collaborating on a bike tourism strategy.

Sanibel: In December, the City of Sanibel and the Sanibel Bicycle Club (SBC) received BWL's 2013 Complete Streets Champion of the Year award for a decade of incredible work to make Sanibel a model walkable, bikeable community. Sanibel's Shared Use Master Plan and its successful implementation is serving as the foundation of many of the city's accomplishments.



Cape Coral's 90 miles of seven interconnected cycling routes, created by Cape Coral Bike-Ped and the city of Cape Coral, with all route signage to be completed in 2014.

BikeWalkLee presents its 2013 Complete Streets Champion of the Year award to the city of Cape Coral and Cape Coral Bike-Ped (CCBP) on Dec. 2.





BikeWalkLee presents its 2013 Complete Streets Champion of the Year award to the city of Sanibel and the Sanibel Bicycle Club on Dec. 3.

The city and SBC have partnered on safety initiatives and the city's policy of promoting biking and walking to island events is a model for others. Sanibel is the only Lee County community with the coveted designation as a "Bicycle Friendly Community," up for renewal in 2014.

Fort Myers: Supported the city's next step efforts to begin to implement its 2011 Complete Streets resolution through the development of a complete streets design manual, modeled after the city of Deerfield's (in Broward County) Living Streets Manual. Drafted in 2013, the Fort Myers manual is currently under review by the Bike/Ped Advisory Board and will go to the Local Planning Agency before final vote on adoption by the City Council in fall 2014.

Bonita Springs: The city's first bike/ped advisory committee is helping to promote safe biking and walking in Bonita. The city's downtown redevelopment plans, approved by the BoCC in November, will include complete streets features, making the area more walkable and bikeable.

Fort Myers Beach: The town's Public Safety Committee has been working to improve pedestrian safety since 2011. Its focus is on crosswalk improvements, lighting of Estero Blvd., traffic calming and safety awareness education. In 2013, the Town installed new rectangular rapid flashing beacons at two crosswalks, installed safety awareness banners along Estero Blvd., removed numerous street signs that were distracting drivers, printed and distributed a new safety brochure, and is adding crosswalk lighting at several high volume crosswalks.

As outlined in earlier section, BWL's No. 1 priority road project is the Estero Blvd. improvement project and we will continue to work closely with Town Council and BoCC advocating for swift and full funding and a complete streets approach (including a roundabout at the island entrance) in designing this project, as well as for the entire corridor from San Carlos Blvd.

Tice Historic Community: BikeWalkLee continues to collaborate with the community planning panel on its recommend "road diet/complete streets" approach to a section of Ortiz avenue. In 2013, BWL partnered with Lee County, the City of Fort Myers, the Nations Association, FGCU, Tice Elementary school staff, Lee Memorial Trauma Center, Stay Alive-Just Drive, local

"The work (the BikeWalkLee steering committee) is doing and the progress you are making in Lee County is truly inspiring. Through our work across the country in 2013, we have seen the complete streets movement reach a tipping point. The work you are doing is making this tipping point possible and improving the quality of life for those living, working, and visiting southwest Florida."

— Brad Davis, Alta Planning + Design



law enforcement and FDOT, to participate in a two-day walking audit and design workshops with national experts from the Project for Public Spaces (through an EPA technical assistance grant) to give feedback on safer walking, biking, transit access and neighborhood revitalization.

The community is now developing a communitywide Bicycle/ Pedestrian Plan with prioritized projects. As a result of the walking audit, FDOT has prioritized improvements in the area. In addition, the MPO's BPCC has ranked as #1 funding priority for bike/ped funds the Tice Elementary School sidewalks project. In 2014, the community will submit its Community Plan for approval by BoCC for incorporation into the Horizon 2035 Lee Plan update.

Florida Gulf Coast University: BikeWalkLee was involved in several initiatives at FGCU, including advocacy to retain the LeeTran bus route 60 and highlighting the importance of alternative transportation planning. BikeWalkLee continues to provide important research to faculty and administrators to promote policies to support compact campus development and non-automobile transportation.

Analysis and action

One of the strengths of BikeWalkLee is that our analysis highlights actions at the federal, state and local level.

Summary of BWL reports

As mentioned in earlier sections of this accomplishments report, BikeWalkLee wrote and distributed reports and analysis on various topics: bicycle tourism, guide to biking resources in Lee County, lessons

Tice mothers participate in the Tice walking audit in May to provide feedback to national and local experts about safe walking needs in their neighborhood.

At the end of the walking audit, Tice residents participate in a workshop at Tice Elementary School to identify priorities for improvement.





Children participating in the November Streets Alive event share their ideas about walking and biking on BikeWalkLee's "pop-up city hall."

“The [2012] “accomplishments” report is very well done — professional, informative, and leaves a terrific impression of the coalition. Thank you for your commitment to making our community a better place to live, and for your efforts at protecting our cherished environment.”

— Bonita Springs City Councilmember Steve McIntosh

learned from Tampa Bike Safety Summit, impact fees and alternative mobility fees structure, new bike/ped facilities constructed, long-term transportation funding realities, strategies for the 2040 LRTP, county budget proposals, comments on various policies, and legislative proposals at local, state, and national level; and presented comments to the BoCC and MPO Board on various topics.

Expansion of advocacy & outreach

- Maintained growing network of advocates and supporters through BikeWalkLee's frequent postings on its blog (<http://bikewalklee.blogspot.com>), its website (www.BikeWalkLee.org), its monthly newsletter (1,000 subscribers), and Facebook (365 friends) and Twitter pages (600 followers). BWL continues to improve and expand its connection with its supporters, with an increasing number of followers.

- The BWL Coalition is kept up-to-date on local bike/ped/transit developments and news, upcoming government meetings, and action alerts and opportunities for input. Continued to receive positive feedback from both advocates and government officials about its quality and usefulness.

- BikeWalkLee coalition members also sit on various committees in the county and local jurisdiction — the county's Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), Community Sustainability Advisory Committee (CSAC), Local Planning Agency (LPA), community planning panels; the MPO's Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee (BPCC), Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), along with working groups, task forces, and committees attached to the various county agencies, and local jurisdictions. Through hands-on participation, BikeWalkLee is committed to being part of making change happen.

Local and national awards

- BikeWalkLee's accomplishments were recognized in 2013 in two awards received by one of BikeWalkLee's founding steering group members, Darla Letourneau. She was among the 15 women named as *Florida Weekly's* "2013 Power Women," a distinction that honors the outstanding female leaders of our community; and was named by WGCU (the local PBS station) as among the "14 MAKERS: Women who Make Southwest Florida."

- Since its launch in 2009, BikeWalkLee's work has been recognized at the local, state, and national levels. In 2012, BikeWalkLee was honored to receive APA Florida's Outstanding

Public Interest Group of the Year Award, a statewide honor. Also in 2012, BikeWalkLee was awarded the 2012 Injury Prevention Program/Outreach Effort of the Year. In 2011, BWL was a finalist for the News-Press "People of the Year" award. Founding members of BikeWalkLee have been recognized by Florida Bicycle Association's Citizen Advocate of the Year in 2010; as finalists in both 2010 and 2011 of Lee County's Paulette Burton Citizen of the Year award; and as Florida Weekly's best advocate of the year in 2011.

- BikeWalkLee's work has also received public recognition by national organizations, such as the National Complete Streets Coalition, the League of American Bicyclists, Transportation for America, and the Alliance for Biking and Walking.

BikeWalkLee priorities for 2014

Integrated planning

VISION: Innovative and integrated land use and transportation planning can enhance our county's livability while encouraging creative new development and redevelopment within the public vision captured through the recent Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) process. This vision supports responsible fiscal management while preserving the desirable aspects of current land uses, protecting private property rights, maintaining value for already-developed properties and encouraging innovation, land conservation and resource management in new development.

- Timely adoption (before November 2014) of the 2035 Horizon Plan comprehensive land use plan amendments consistent with the public vision expressed through the EAR process.

- Selection by the Metropolitan Planning Organization board of a land use scenario option that supports a balanced multi-modal 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, integrating existing and future land use and transportation planning.

- Adoption of the Sustainability Plan, as proposed by the county's Sustainability Office and the Community Sustainability Advisory Committee. The plan, which incorporates the principles of complete streets, is an important road map for Lee County in achieving stability through balance in economy, environment and social equity.



2013 was one of the worst years on record for pedestrian fatalities and bike injuries in Lee County, trends that must be reversed.





BikeWalkLee's Darla Letourneau (left), Margaret Banyan (center) and Cindy Banyai, sporting their BikeWalkLee jerseys, at the Nov. 10 Streets Alive event.

Quality of life

VISION: Making Lee County an attractive and active community of choice is the most effective way of attracting and retaining quality employers and entrepreneurs to invest in Lee County.

- Advocate for the review and reinstatement of funding for infrastructure through impact and/or mobility fees with the goal of ensuring that growth pays for growth and that necessary and desirable infrastructure and amenities are in place when newcomers are ready to take advantage of it. Any other approach unfairly shifts the cost to current taxpayers.

- Plan a transition pathway to enact mobility fees as a replacement for road impact fees, to encourage multimodal transportation options and development in-fill and economic renewal.

- Promote the message that quality of life issues and adequate public facilities make Lee County an attractive place to live, work and play. Economic development as a “race to the bottom” where one sector cannibalizes all others is neither good management nor sound budgetary policy. Stable and self-supporting economic development needs to support and fund those elements that make this an attractive community for entrepreneurs, businesses and employees — a community worth long-term investment.

- As the public face of Lee County to current and prospective residents, visitors and businesses, government entities at all levels must strive for a greater degree of transparency, accessibility and accountability in all its operations.

- Support bike tourism efforts to promote both the county and Southwest Florida: Continue working with the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau on incorporating bike tourism into Lee County’s tourism strategy, using the completion of the Cape Coral 90-mile biking route as a new marketing opportunity. On the state level, urge legislators to incorporate bike tourism into its tourism economic development strategy, and to support funding for the “Coast to Coast Connector” trail.

Transit

VISION: A mass transit system with adequate resources and planning will attract and retain users by being reliable, timely and consistent. Planning now for future transit needs will enable us to proactively prepare for growing transportation needs in a time of drastically shrinking funding.

- Adequate funding for the current transit system to support an effective option for residents, workers and visitors. Specifically, we support continuing the LinC line, improvements in the Route 60 line and restoration of evening and weekend service cuts, as well as no further transit budget cuts in FY 2015.

- Identify unique transit stakeholders and their needs, to encourage innovative solutions to increase their use of the system and reduce their reliance on individual vehicles for all their transportation needs.

Safety

VISION: Safe walking and biking conditions promote higher levels of activity and facility usage. Our vision is to increase both the real and perceived safety conditions so usage of new public and private facilities will continue to increase.

- Seek agencies and jurisdiction to make implementation of the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Bicycle/ Pedestrian Safety Action Plan a top priority.

- Launch a countywide enforcement and education campaign in 2014.

- Urge state legislators to strengthen a ban on texting while driving by making it a primary offense; strengthen hit-and-run laws, and oppose efforts to raise speed limits in general.

- Work with partners to increase focus on and awareness of bike/ped safety in the face of rising rates of injuries and fatalities and continue to stress the importance of education, enforcement and engineering in improving bike/ped safety.

Previous BikeWalkLee accomplishments reports

- **2012 accomplishments:** http://www.bikewalklee.org/BWL_PDFs/BWL_facts/2012accompBWL.pdf

- **2011 accomplishments:** http://www.bikewalklee.org/BWL_PDFs/BWL_facts/BWL%202011%20AccomplishREVkg.pdf

- **2010 accomplishments:** http://www.bikewalklee.org/BWL_PDFs/BWL_facts/BWL_2010accomplishments.pdf

- **2009 accomplishments:** http://www.bikewalklee.com/BWL_PDFs/BWL_facts/BWLaccomplishments2009.pdf



BikeWalkLee steering group members... back row (from left): Margaret Banyan, Kate Gooderham, Ken Gooderham, Darla Letourneau, Bruce Butcher and Dan Moser. Front row (from left): Ann Pierce, Mike Bacigalupo and Steve Chupack.

BikeWalkLee Steering Group

The Steering Group represents a broad array of professionals within the community, including educators, private business owners, sustainable growth professionals, bike/ped experts and advocates, policy analysts, alternative transportation planners, local bicycle clubs, and other community activists. The Steering Group includes local BikeWalkLee representatives in each jurisdiction (noted below):

- Mike Bacigalupo (BWL’s Cape Coral representative)
- Sarah Baker (BWL’s Bonita Springs representative)
- Margaret Banyan, Ph.D. (BWL’s FGCU representative)
- Cindy Banyai, Ph.D.
- Bruce Butcher (BWL’s Fort Myers Beach representative)
- Steve Chupack
- Kate Gooderham
- Ken Gooderham
- Bert Hamilton
- Darla Letourneau
- Dan Moser
- Ann Pierce (BWL’s Fort Myers representative)
- Steve Rodgers
- Tom Sharbaugh (BWL’s Sanibel representative)

Thanks to our BikeWalkLee supporter organizations!

- AARP of Florida
- Acme Bicycle Shop
- American Planning Association (APA) Florida Promised Lands Section
- American Institute of Architects of Southwest Florida
- Audubon Society of Southwest Florida
- The Bike Bistro*
- The Bike Route, Inc.
- BikeWalk Central Florida*
- Billy's Bike Shop
- Bonita Bay Bicycle Club
- Brooks Concerned Citizens
- Caloosa Riders Bicycle Club
- Cape Coral Bike Ped
- The Conservancy of Southwest Florida
- Center for Independent Living (CIL) Gulf Coast*
- Engels Bicycles International
- Ensite Inc.
- Estero Council of Community Leaders
- Florida Bicycle Association
- Florida Gulf Coast University
- Florida Wildlife Federation
- Fort Myers Schwinn Cyclery Inc.
- The Foundation for Lee County Public Schools*
- Geared Up! Coaching and Triathlon Training
- Gooderham & Associates Inc.
- Goodwill Industries
- Harvey Software Inc.
- Healthy Lee Coalition (formerly Fit Friendly Southwest Florida)
- Hollywood Bicycle Center*
- Injury Prevention Coalition
- Lee Memorial Health System
- Lehigh Acres Bicycle Club
- Lehigh Acres Community Planning Panel*
- Missing in America Veterans Recovery Program
- Naples Pathways Coalition
- Palm Beach Boulevard Planning Panel*
- Paradise Bikes
- Realtor Association of Greater Fort Myers and the Beach Inc.
- Reconnecting Lee
- Responsible Growth Management Council
- River of Grass Greenway (ROGG)
- SalusCare (the merger of two supporter organizations: Southwest Florida Addiction Services and Lee Mental Health)
- Sanibel Bicycle Club
- Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation
- Sierra Club of Southwest Florida
- The Willbur C. Smith III Law Firm*
- Southwest Florida Council of the Blind*
- Southwest Florida Bicycling
- Southwest Florida Events Inc.
- Southwest Florida Watershed Council*
- Spikowski Planning Associates
- Start Walking! Campaign (AHA)
- Stay Alive...Just Drive!
- Streets Alive of Lee County
- SustainabLEE
- Thump Fitness
- Trek Bicycle Store of Estero
- YMCA of Fort Myers



National partners:

- Alliance for Biking and Walking
- America Bikes
- America Walks
- League of American Bicyclists
- National Complete Streets Coalition
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
- Smart Growth America
- Transportation for America

*Organizations added in 2013