



July 18, 2010

Dear Candidate for Lee County Commission:

BikeWalkLee is a community coalition raising public awareness and advocating for complete streets in Lee County. We define complete streets as those 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. We have partnered with 30 stakeholder organizations in the community that want to improve the quality of life and mobility in Lee County. Our partners include Florida Gulf Coast University, health care organizations, safety prevention groups, AARP of Florida, citizen and community groups, environmental organizations, planners, smart growth committees and coalitions, bike clubs and bike shops.

Over the past two years, both the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) have demonstrated leadership and taken the initial policy steps needed to make our streets safer and more accessible to all users. The next few years will determine whether these initial steps will result in changes on the ground for Lee County residents.

It is important to BikeWalkLee to elect county commissioners who support our values and vision; therefore, we are asking all candidates for Lee County Commission to respond to the attached questionnaire. We plan to post your responses on our website and blog and share with our network of 1,000 advocates and supporters. Please submit your responses electronically to: [dletourneau@bikewalklee.org](mailto:dletourneau@bikewalklee.org).

For more information about our coalition, please visit our website: [www.bikewalklee.org](http://www.bikewalklee.org), and our blog: <http://bikewalklee.blogspot.com/>. If you have any questions about the organization or the questionnaire, please feel free to contact me at the above email address.

Sincerely,

Darla Letourneau  
On behalf of the Steering Group  
BikeWalkLee

Attachment: BikeWalkLee Questionnaire for BoCC Candidates



## Questions for BoCC Candidates from BikeWalkLee

7/18/10

1. In November 2009, the BoCC unanimously adopted a Complete Streets Resolution which calls for streets that are designed, built, operated and maintained for safe and convenient travel for all users—pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists of all ages and abilities.

**Question:** If you are elected what will you do to ensure that the county incorporates Complete Streets into the way it does business? How will you measure success?

2. The current county approach to funding transportation is heavily weighted toward cars and trucks. It assumes that it is possible to build our way out of congestion rather than encouraging innovative designs and creative solutions. The current approach to funding transportation (89% to roads, 10% to transit, and 1% to bike/ped facilities) is not sustainable.

**Question:** What do you think is a more efficient and effective mix of transportation spending? How would you propose to move in that direction?

3. The County's goals for 2010-11 include reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as a way to reduce greenhouse gases, conserve energy, and reduce congestion.

**Question:** What role do you think walking, bicycling, and transit should play in order to meet this goal?

4. With the deep recession in Lee County, there needs to be a focus on revitalizing our economy and broadening its current base of construction and tourism.

**Question:** What do you believe is the connection between livability and economic competitiveness? How relevant is biking, walking, and transit to a more livable community?

5. The MPO is moving forward with transit authority plans and a 1 cent sales tax referendum in 2012 as a way to pay for transit and potentially bike/ped-related improvements.

**Question:** Do you support the creation of a transit authority? Would you support a referendum on such a sales tax? Would you support the sales tax? Would you commit to ensuring that a portion of the sales tax goes for bike/ped projects?

6. The MPO is working on a countywide bike/ped master plan for implementation in 2011. This plan will likely include priority projects for funding, recommendations for policies, and cross-jurisdictional cooperation to ensure that we have a seamless and connected bike/ped network throughout Lee County.

**Question:** How high a priority will you place on implementation of this plan if you are elected?

7. Bike/ped safety is a major issue in Lee County, with fatality and injury rates 2 and 3 times the national averages.

**Question:** How would you recommend taking action to address safety issues for bicyclists and pedestrians if you're elected? (Below is a list of some possible actions)

- Support increased use of signage to provide greater safety for walker and cyclists?
- A community safety campaign to lower fatalities and injuries?
- Support intersection and road improvements?
- Marking bike lanes?
- Maintaining bike lanes and sidewalks to ensure their safe use?
- What other actions would you take to improve safety?

8. Both the MPO Resolution 09-05 and the BoCC's Complete Streets Resolution, set a policy that bike/ped/transit facilities need to be included at the front-end of the planning for all road projects. Such an approach is intended to reduce the cost of expensive retrofits by "doing it right the first time."

**Question:** What will you do to ensure that bike/ped/transit facilities are included in all new and improved road projects?

9. Several surveys of Lee County residents show that there is significant support and utilization for biking and walking facilities.

**Question:** What will you do to ensure that the needs and desires of citizens in this area are heard and acted upon?

10. Research shows that biking, walking, and transit users are healthier than those who do not take part in these activities. It has also been proven that biking, walking, and taking public transit decreases the risk of serious illness and obesity.

**Question:** What kinds of initiatives would you support to ensure that planners and developers prioritize health in the built environment?