



September 20, 2011

City of Fort Myers Mayor and City Council Members
Oscar M. Corbin Jr. City Hall
2200 Second Street
Fort Myers, FL 33902

Dear Honorable Mayor and City Council Members:

BikeWalkLee is a citizen based community coalition that works to raise public awareness and advocate for complete streets within Fort Myers and all of Lee County--streets that are designed, built, operated and maintained for safe and convenient travel for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit riders, and persons of all ages and abilities. We wish to make known our endorsement of the City of Fort Myers' Complete Streets Resolution that comes before you on Oct 3rd. As a coalition with a large number of diverse stakeholders, we offer our full support for this resolution and its future implementation within the City of Fort Myers.

This resolution is a significant step forward for the city. It is comprehensive in its vision, practical in application and wholly oriented towards a healthier, safer, economically vibrant and socially sustainable future for Fort Myers. The adoption and implementation of a Complete Streets Resolution will provide the basis for comprehensive linkages and continuity, tying together various city land use, transportation, and bike/ped policies. It is a natural extension of the city's current Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan and the elegant improvements to the streets downtown.

Complete streets save taxpayers money. By addressing the needs of all road users at the front-end of all road projects (new construction as well as road improvements) in the routine process of planning, design, construction, maintenance and operations, costly retrofits can be avoided. In these tough economic times, it is important to spend public resources in the most cost-effective and efficient way possible. "Doing it right the first time", addressing the needs of all users at the front-end, is key to this cost-effective approach.

This Complete Streets Resolution positions the city, in alliance with Lee County and the recently adopted MPO Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan, as a leader within southwest Florida in developing the highly desirable "livable communities" sought by people from across the nation and the world. Its adoption lays the groundwork for a new level of collaboration between city departments, the county and the MPO, each with their own areas of knowledge and expertise, bringing together parts to make a far greater whole. Complete Streets are most effective when contiguous governments can work together in achieving the principles and goals; for example, this resolution

will offer benefits to the city in grant funding such as the MPO's upcoming submission of an application for the federal TIGER III grant for a Bicycle /Pedestrian /Transit Complete Streets Project which includes a City of Fort Myers component.

We applaud the Resolution for the priority it places on safety and accessibility. This Resolution advocates for a twenty-first century transportation system that seeks to reduce injuries and fatalities of its most vulnerable citizens--pedestrians, cyclists, older people, children and the disabled. Further, as a relocation and tourist destination, Florida cannot afford its persistent and growing reputation as the most dangerous state for pedestrians and cyclists. It is not by chance that the AARP is one of the main signatories to the Complete Streets Coalition. An aging population needs a multimodal transportation system that is accessible, interconnected and above all safe.

Complete Streets can engender a uniqueness and economic strength spurred by investment in mixed-use, transit oriented development, supporting the diversity of businesses required for a sustained return to viability in Fort Myers. Complete Streets will allow individuals the personal freedom to safely choose the transportation modes and costs that best fit their business, household, physical and economic needs. We urge you to support the Complete Streets Resolution at your October 3 meeting. Thank you.

Sincerely,

/s/

Darla Letourneau and Ann Pierce
On behalf of BikeWalkLee