

RESOLUTION NO.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT MYERS, FLORIDA, INITIATING THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING GUIDELINES, PROCESSES, AND PROCEDURES FOR ESTABLISHING A COMPLETE STREETS PROGRAM ADHERING TO THE PRINCIPLE THAT ALL PERSONS OF ALL AGES AND ABILITIES WHO TRAVEL BY AUTOMOBILE, MOTORCYCLE, PUBLIC TRANSIT, BICYCLE OR WALKING ARE EQUAL LEGITIMATE USERS OF ROADWAYS AND SHALL BE PROVIDED SAFE ACCESS TO ALL CITY PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS: City Council seeks to make Fort Myers become a more livable and lively city, a healthy, economically robust community with system wide choices of safe, convenient access to roadways and trails for all users with a more balanced human scale environment, where a complete streets program is employed; and

WHEREAS: A complete streets program is designed to reduce congestion, increase the transportation network capacity, and increase consumer choice while decreasing consumer transportation costs, improve air quality, improve community health, enhance community aesthetics, augment economic growth, increase community stability by providing accessible and efficient connections between home, school, work, recreation, and retail destinations; and

WHEREAS: City Council seeks to improve the leadership exhibited by existing city streets as provided by complete street design through the historic grid system design, the incorporation of sidewalks, residential street speed limits, traffic calming measures, and pedestrian signalization; and

WHEREAS: The interdisciplinary integration of land use and transportation planning in the implementation of a complete streets program seeks the goal of safe, accessible community wide, multimodal connectivity, that allows a range of alternative choices for daily

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functional transportation, including for children walking to school on safe routes to school; and

WHEREAS: Existing development decisions, traditional land use and transportation planning, and roadway design standards can have unintended consequences on the daily quality of life of the citizens standards by reducing individual transportation choices and widespread dependence on motor vehicles for even the very shortest of trips when the current transportation system does not recognize that arterials and collectors may function as local roads for short trips due to an absence of a connectivity grid of transit, bike lanes and sidewalks to allow choices of other safe modes of transport; and

WHEREAS: A balanced urban community requires a comprehensive, deeply integrated, network of roadways designed and planned from a sustainable whole systems approach, while also sensitive to the context and needs of the different wards and neighborhoods within the city to provide equal access to transportation options for all users; and

WHEREAS: Transportation for America, a national coalition, released a report showing that between 2000 and 2009, the Cape Coral Fort Myers metropolitan statistical area (Lee County) as one of the most dangerous in the nation for cyclists and pedestrians. Injuries and deaths for both groups exceed state and national averages and City Council seeks to enhance existing efforts to improve the safety of walking and biking through street design and traffic operations to reduce or eliminate unintended hazardous conditions; and

WHEREAS: Unsafe conditions involving bicycles and pedestrians can be ameliorated when proper facilities, roadway redesign, traffic calming, effective signage and other techniques of complete streets are integrated into the urban landscape through the Land Development

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Code, the Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element, the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR), and the Bike and Pedestrian Plan; and

WHEREAS: Over one-third of Americans do not drive, a figure increasing with our aging of the population, and transportation choice and accessibility are issues of social equity as minorities, the elderly and children are disproportionate among those with limited transportation choices when the affordable transportation options of biking, walking and transit are not sufficiently safe, effective or available leading to significant social and economic isolation and decline, with frequent poor health outcomes; and

WHEREAS: Recent data on public health identifies a direct correlation between land use decisions, automobile dependency, a lack of alternative transportation choices, and poor health resulting in increased sedentary life habits and obesity, the second leading cause of death in the United States, with increased risks of over 13 separate chronic diseases and many cancers; and

WHEREAS: Adoption of complete streets program principles is in alignment with the current efforts of the City to become a recognized fit friendly community and realize measurable positive health outcomes through implementation of the principles of complete streets and safe human powered transportation choices that foster significant improvements in community health parameters, and lowering community health care costs; and

WHEREAS: Increasing the opportunity for biking, pedestrian, and transit travel through better integration of land use and transportation planning reduces reliance on fossil fuels, places the City in a position to more effectively reduce greenhouse emissions and concentrations of other atmospheric pollutants, such as carbon

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monoxide, associated with increased rates of asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; and

WHEREAS: Numerous studies and surveys, including each of the most recent years of the National Association of Realtors, Smart Growth Surveys, indicate a strong and growing preference among homebuyers for walkable, mixed-use communities when selecting where to live due to enhanced individual and community economic vitality when all aspects of community living intertwine with effective, safe, accessible and reliable transportation choices; and

WHEREAS: The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), a member of the national Complete Streets Coalition, strongly endorses Livable Communities policies such as walkable, bikeable communities that realize the benefits of significantly higher property values, additional business activity, increased tourism, and greater health savings; and

WHEREAS: Travel by foot, bicycle or transit represents money retained in the community as demonstrated by a 2010 case study by the University of Massachusetts that compared the employment impacts of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure with traditional roadway projects and found that on street bike lanes and pedestrian measures created more direct jobs, more indirect jobs, and more induced jobs per dollar than either road upgrades or road resurfacing; and

WHEREAS: The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) of the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) Design Guidance for Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel issued in 2000 provides that bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be established in new construction and reconstruction projects in all urbanized areas. Excluded projects are those where bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the roadway, when costs are 20 percent or

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higher than the larger transportation project, and where the sparsity of population indicate an absence of need; and

WHEREAS: Florida Statutes, Section 335.065(1)(a) Bicycle and pedestrian ways along state roads and transportation facilities provides that bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be given full consideration in the planning and development of transportation facilities and that bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be established in conjunction with the construction, reconstruction, or other change of any state transportation facility, and special emphasis shall be given to projects in or within 1 mile of an urban area; and

WHEREAS: The 2005 Florida Legislature directed Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to determine ways to increase the use of bicycles to conserve energy, reduce pollution, and improve health, and recommended that public agencies accommodate bicycling on all non limited access roadways in Florida and warned the way Florida plans its development and roadways must change; and

WHEREAS: To the fullest extent possible, and with a multi discipline input, consideration of existing natural systems shall be incorporated from the earliest phases of design, planning, and implementation of complete streets, utilizing sustainable choices such as handling of storm water through a variety of location specific low impact development techniques, to include, with particular emphasis, the extensive use of Shade Trees for bike and pedestrian ways, and where possible, transit stops; and

WHEREAS: The Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), made up of elected officials from every municipality in Lee County, of which the City of Fort Myers is a member, unanimously adopted the 2011 Lee County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan; and

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WHEREAS: Lee County Commissioners unanimously adopted a complete streets resolution in 2009 urging all the other cities and towns within Lee County to embrace and adopt complete streets guidelines and policies and integrate them into their standard street design and operations; and

WHEREAS: The City Council adopted the Fort Myers City Wide Traffic Calming Plan in 2003 and the Fort Myers Bike and Pedestrian Plan in 2007; and

WHEREAS: These plans led to many bike and pedestrian safety improvements throughout the City and the guiding principle of this complete streets resolution is to build upon these plans and further integrate them with the City Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code to achieve a whole-system based, community-wide grid of connectivity; and

WHEREAS: A successful complete streets program solicits citizen input throughout the entire processes of planning, design, and implementation and such public input is a critical aspect in the creation of an effective system by providing for regular, formal input and analysis from a citizen advisory board and seeking higher standards of quality and efficiencies through multi-jurisdictional communication, coordination, and the sharing of best practices; and

WHEREAS: The City Council desires to create a complete streets policy and, in alliance with Lee County, to continue demonstrating its leadership within the region, the state of Florida, and the nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT MYERS, FLORIDA, that:

1. The City will review all applicable land development and transportation policies, resolutions, studies, plans and ordinances in order to develop a complete streets program by October 2012. During

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the review and in developing the complete streets program, the City shall consider the following:

- a. Incorporation of the principles of complete streets into an interdisciplinary, integrative, multimodal transportation policy with implementation guidelines.
 - b. Inclusion of all users for all street projects to include planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operations activities.
 - c. Balancing the needs for bicycling, pedestrians, public transit, and vehicles with community values including fiscal constraint, public safety, environmental protection, and historic preservation.
 - d. Incorporation of the latest, best, and context sensitive design standards in developing new policies and procedures for complete streets that accommodate all user needs.
2. The City will consider and incorporate to the extent practical the goals and policies of the complete streets program in the amendment and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and other applicable plans and ordinances.
3. The City will consider and incorporate the complete street program to the extent practical in the amendment, design, development, construction, operations, and implementation of City standards, projects, facilities, policies, and development reviews.
4. The City will encourage other agencies with transportation jurisdiction within the City boundaries to adopt and implement complete street principles for projects and plans within and adjoining the City jurisdiction.
5. The City supports and encourages the public involvement and promotion of complete streets principles in coordination with

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partnering agencies and organizations to provide public awareness for the transportation, quality of life, public safety, and health benefits of the complete streets program.

6. The City seeks to develop a complete streets program to become a complete streets city, a leader in Florida, and the nation in coordination and cooperation with comparative jurisdictions with complete streets programs.

7. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.