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.
BikeWalkLee was formed in 2009, with many accomplishments in its first six years. These include adoption of complete streets policies by the Lee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Lee Board of County Commissioners, the City Councils of Fort Myers and Bonita Springs; several countywide plans developed and adopted by the Lee MPO — a countywide bike/ped master plan, a countywide bike/ped safety action plan — and the award of a major federal TIGER grant for a Complete Streets Initiative Project. Bike/ped safety continued to be an overarching priority in 2014.
Bike/ped safety campaign

Since its inception, BikeWalkLee has advocated for complete streets — streets that are accessible and safe for all road users. Making our community safer for pedestrians and cyclists is an overarching goal of many of the initiatives we’ve undertaken.

For most of the past decade, Florida has consistently been the most dangerous state in the country for pedestrians and cyclists. As part of the Florida Dept. of Transportation’s (FDOT) comprehensive bike/ped safety initiative launched in 2011, Lee County is one of the 10 communities targeted in the campaign, due to its high rates of bike and pedestrian fatalities and injuries.

Lee County’s pedestrian fatality rate was almost twice the national average, while the cyclist fatality rate was a startling four times higher than the national average.

- BikeWalkLee continued to focus on implementation by all the stakeholders of the MPO’s Bike/Ped Safety Action Plan adopted by the Lee MPO Board in September 2013. This action plan is 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 release of the national 2014 Dangerous by Design report, and wrote an accompanying report analyzing the Lee County data and highlighting the actions that the county has taken to address the problem. Worked successfully to get media coverage of the report.

- Throughout the year, BikeWalkLee continued its close collaboration with FDOT on its bike/ped safety initiative. This included collaborating on roundtable discussions with local law enforcement officials; encouraging local law enforcement agencies to apply for FDOT High Visibility Enforcement grants; and working with the media so its representatives can be an effective part of the education and awareness effort.

As a result, FDOT grants were received by the Florida Highway Patrol, Lee County Sheriff’s Office, Fort Myers Police Dept. and Cape Coral Police Dept. BikeWalkLee and other safety partners participated in these visible safety details out on the roads throughout the county, with 53 details undertaken to date. These operations were part of a comprehensive safety campaign that promotes safe pedestrian, bicyclist and driver behaviors. These periodic details were extensively covered by the media, providing broader public awareness and education of all road users.

- During 2014, the Lee MPO implemented one of the action items in the bike/ped safety action plan, conducting Road Safety Audits (RSAs) of five dangerous intersections and/or highway sections. These in-depth two-day field visits with a multidisciplinary team, including BikeWalkLee and other safety partners.

“Lee County is a better place for cyclists and pedestrians because of the work of Darla and the BikeWalkLee coalition.”

—Becky Afonso, Florida Bicycle Association Executive Director, presenting FBA’s Citizen Bike Advocate of the Year Award to Darla Letourneau at the Nov. 21, 2014 MPO Board meeting
stakeholders, came up with recommendations for potential safety improvement projects for each of these five areas, which will be 2015 priorities.

- BikeWalkLee partnered with the News-Press, in collaboration with the Naples Pathways Coalition, on its important year-long “Share the Road Florida” safety campaign. As a result of the News-Press commitment of resources and attention to this issue, their award winning feature writer has written at least 10 in-depth feature stories about bike safety issues. They also started a “Share the Road Florida” Facebook Page where they encourage the public to share their thoughts, opinions and observations about cycling and road safety in Southwest Florida. As part of this campaign, the News-Press has also written several editorials on bike/ped safety, and published commentaries by BikeWalkLee and its partners. BikeWalkLee’s bi-weekly columns in the News-Press have also emphasized the safety theme this year. In addition to the News-Press, other print and TV media outlets have also increased media coverage of bike/ped safety issues and are part of the larger media effort to educate and raise awareness by all road users about the importance of safe behaviors.

- BikeWalkLee continued to promote the annual Ride of Silence which honors cyclists who have been injured or killed while riding and raises awareness about cyclists’ legal right to use the roadways. There were strong local turnouts at both the Fort Myers and Sanibel events in 2014, which received media attention, an opportunity to raise awareness.

- BikeWalkLee participated in the first annual Bicycle Bullying Buster Ride in November 2014, raising awareness about harassment of cyclists on our roadways. The ride, sponsored in partnership with State Rep. Heather Fitzenhagen with Fort Myers Mayor Randy Henderson’s participation, received media coverage, again an opportunity to raise awareness.

- Several tragic bike/ped fatalities in Cape Coral galvanized the community, with calls for action by elected officials, agencies, and law enforcement to make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists, esp. school-age children, to use the streets. BikeWalkLee along with other safety partners have been actively engaged with Cape Coral officials to come up with an action plan. As a result, the Cape Coral Police launched a bike patrol program and won an FDOT grant for enhanced bike/ped safety details. The City Council is considering several safety-related initiatives, including lowering speed limits and increasing funding for sidewalks and paths; and have the city implement the relevant action plan elements of the MPO Bike/Ped Safety Action Plan. BikeWalkLee is working closely with Waterman

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“The purpose of the MPO’s Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Action Plan is to reduce bicycle and pedestrian crashes and one of the strategies to accomplish this goal is conducting an educational outreach campaign. BikeWalkLee has done a terrific job this year using the News Press bi-weekly columns to reach out to drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians providing opportunities to raise awareness of our safety issues and providing educational safety messages to help correct these issues.”

—Don Scott, Lee MPO Executive Director
Media, which is taking a leadership role, in the development of bike/ped safety public service announcements to air in 2015.

- BikeWalkLee, along with its many local and statewide safety partners, advocated for stronger penalties for hit-and-run drivers — the “Aaron Cohen Life Protection Act,” named for a Miami cyclist who was killed by a hit and run driver in 2012 — which was enacted by the Florida Legislature. The team also advocated for legislation to strengthen enforcement of the texting ban, which was not acted on last year. We also advocated against a bill that would have raised the speed limit on certain roads, which was passed by the Legislature but vetoed by the Governor.

- BikeWalkLee testified before the Lee Legislative Delegation last year and again this year asking our elected officials to both support and champion legislation that would strengthen the laws and enforcement tools to make Florida roadways safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

- BikeWalkLee has long advocated for a statewide complete streets policy as the best framework for improving bike/ped safety, and was gratified by FDOT’s September 2014 issuance of a statewide complete streets policy and implementation plan. This statewide policy signals that safety requires a culture shift that says roadways are for everyone and should be designed, constructed and managed with all users in mind.

- Joined other advocates from around the country and submitted formal comments to USDOT in April urging them to set specific performance goals for reducing the number of bicyclists and pedestrians killed on our roadways to ensure that states and MPOs are held accountable for results. The national campaign was successful in December, when Congress took action.

- Continued to urge 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.

- BikeWalkLee broadened its coalition with six new supporter organizations in 2014 — the FGCU Student Planning Association, Jim Dodson Law, Lee Public Voice, Go Girl Cycling, College Parkway Redevelopment Group, and Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation.

Pedestrian fatalities in Lee County dropped in 2014 compared to the record high in 2013, but are still above recent trends — and Lee County’s pedestrian fatality rate is 2.5 times higher than the national rate.

“BikeWalkLee is the most effective bike/ped advocacy group in all of Southwest Florida if not the entire state.”

— Billy Hattaway, FDOT District 1 Secretary and leader of FDOT’s statewide bike/ped safety initiative.
BikeWalkLee representatives continued serving on executive steering committee for Healthy Lee Coalition, whose goals include expanding support for complete streets to promote healthy lifestyles and fight obesity.

Supported the second annual Streets Alive, in collaboration with Florida Department of Health in Lee County, IFAS, United Way, USA Dance, Lee County Parks & Recreation, Healthy Lee and the City of Fort Myers. This unique event opened the streets of downtown Fort Myers for people to walk, run and ride traffic-free, and bringing the “open streets/cyclovia” concept to Lee County. BikeWalkLee’s booth provided an opportunity for participants to join the community conversation about making our neighborhoods more livable. This year’s event included a bike safety rodeo for kids, as well as a FDOT booth focused on the bike/ped safety message.

Promoted and participated in Gil Penalosa’s (the international “father” of the cyclovia movement) keynote address at a statewide transit conference in Naples, on the eve of Lee County’s own cyclovia event — Streets Alive. FDOT’s Billy Hattaway played a key role in the event, which was well attended by elected officials in Lee County, adding momentum to local efforts for complete streets/livable communities implementation.

BikeWalkLee’s biweekly column in the News-Press’ “Go Coastal” section is increasing visibility for BikeWalkLee and its mission, with a reach of 432,000 readers weekly. BikeWalkLee 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. This year our columns placed more emphasis on bike/ped safety messages.

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

Continued our partnership with the Lee County Health Department, Florida Gulf Coast University, and many other community stakeholders in the Tice Historic Community, building on the successful 2013 Project for Public Spaces (through EPA grant) two-day walking audit to improve community engagement and livability. In December, the Florida Dept. of Health Lee County received a Health Impact Assessment grant to be used in the Tice community to conduct an assessment of the health impacts of various proposed roadway changes in the community.

Continued BikeWalkLee “show and tell” bike rides for local citizens, officials, staff, and committees to show them the “good, bad, and the ugly” of the county’s bike/ped facilities, providing
them first-hand experience with which to make decisions on bike/ped matters. To date, some 125 individuals have participated in these rides with an audit of downtown Fort Myers attracting 30 participants, including Fort Myers Mayor, Councilpersons, and city staff.

- Collaborated with many public interest and community groups through Lee Public Voice, a new network of organizations and associations, advocating and educating both elected officials and the public in Lee County on issues that affect our sensitive natural resources, exceptional quality of life and a growing, diversified economy. As part of this network, we advocated for the adoption of the Horizon 2035 Lee Plan Amendments, the County's Sustainability Plan, restoring full impact fees for transportation, park, and school projects; moving forward with a robust 2020 conservation lands acquisition program; and for opportunities for more meaningful public input at all county commission meetings.

- Partnered with the City of Fort Myers, APA, AIA, and Randy Krise Commercial Real Estate to sponsor a mixed-use development seminar, presenting the team behind a successful project in Sarasota. The focus was on opportunities for mixed use and walkable communities in Fort Myers and Lee County. The successful event brought together over 200 participants, including elected officials, top level staff, realtors, bankers, planners, and other community leaders.

- Participated in the “Blue Zone” initiative launched in Collier County and South Lee in October. This is a major long-term initiative that uses scientific research to help communities boost their well-being through a community-wide collaboration with a broad spectrum of partners and community groups. A key focus of these projects is permanent change in the environment, i.e. the built environment—roads, sidewalks, biking facilities, parks, buildings, etc., and a focus on a complete streets approach. Collier leaders have committed to this project and it’s already resulting in approval of projects such as roundabouts, road diets, mixed use, etc., with opportunities for influencing developments in Lee County. BikeWalkLee is engaged in
observing this effort and will continue to participate in meetings and discussions.

- Attended the national Congress for New Urbanism Transportation Equity conference in New York. The conference was especially valuable to underscoring the importance of transportation equity. In addition, presenters used research-based evidence that challenges transportation planning myths. For example, conference presenters demonstrated that the projections related to automobile travel far exceed demand. BikeWalkLee networked with transportation engineers and planners who will be essential resources for future consultation.

- Partnered with nine national coalitions and associations that provide BikeWalkLee with valuable national information and strategic advice and a network of national advocates, adding the Strong Towns Network this year. 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, and shared those learnings with elected officials and staff in BikeWalkLee’s network. In addition, this year a BikeWalkLee representative was a panelist on a national mutual aid call about how to win a TIGER grant; and on a statewide webinar about how to implement complete streets in Florida from an advocate’s perspective.

- At the end of 2014, BikeWalkLee played a role in Lee County’s selection as one of the 100 communities across the country to receive free hand-on technical assistance in how to make our communities more bicycle friendly, as part of the League of American Bicyclists’ (LAB) new Bicycle Friendly Communities (BFC) initiative, which brings bicycle-friendly expertise directly to the local level. BikeWalkLee coordinated and participated in the visits of LAB’s BCF expert to four Lee County cities (Sanibel, Cape Coral, Bonita Springs, and Fort Myers), as
well as organizing two additional events with advocates, in early January 2015. The visits provided an opportunity for extensive media coverage, which is helping raise awareness of how making our communities more bicycle-friendly can make our communities better places to live for everyone. The visits provided each city with ideas, strategies, and best practices from other communities, and recommendations for improvements that can be made to make our cities more bicycle-friendly, with an emphasis on some easy and low-cost improvements that can be made quickly. A focus in 2015 will be on implementation of the many suggestions made during these site visits.

**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 county commission, 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, BikeWalkLee 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 2014 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 implementation
- MPO’s Federal TIGER grant for its Complete Streets Initiative project
- 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
- Collaboration with Tice Historic Community Planning Panel to complete a bike/ped priority map for community walking and bicycling facilities.

“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
Complete Streets policies & implementation

In 2014, Bonita Springs City Council adopted a complete streets policy, the fourth Lee County entity to adopt a complete streets policy since BikeWalkLee’s formation in 2009.

With the issuance of the FDOT complete streets policy in October and with its comprehensive implementation plan which will change many other FDOT policies and guidances, it is anticipated that more communities in Lee County and throughout Florida will adopt policies.

- BikeWalkLee continues to work with each entity on the implementation of its complete streets policies. This includes continuing work on the Complete Streets Design Manual in the city of Fort Myers. This year, Lee County’s complete streets implementation plan stalled with the county administration’s failure to move forward on the Comp Plan amendments package that has been under development since 2010.

- BikeWalkLee was a panelist on a statewide webinar featuring FDOT’s Billy Hattaway, to talk about implementation of complete streets in Florida from an advocate’s perspective.

- 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 News-Press, and in published commentaries, our blog posts and newsletters, and attendance at multiple public events.

- BikeWalkLee representatives served on the Complete Streets Working Group (CSWG) of the county’s Community Sustainability Advisory Committee (CSAC) to collaborate with county staff on complete streets implementation. As part of the CSWG, continued to review resurfacing contract projects and identified needed improvements to complete the streets (such are road diets, share the road signs, improved crosswalks, reduced speed limits). In 2014, these projects were prioritized by BPAC for consideration in upcoming CIPs.

- Reviewed the Capital Infrastructure Program (CIP) and provided recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners (county commission), with a focus on making the CIP more consistent with fiscal realities and the county’s complete streets goals.

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

Lee MPO Transportation Planning and 2040 LRTP

BikeWalkLee is deeply engaged in Lee MPO work, from board meetings to committee meetings. BikeWalkLee 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.

- BikeWalkLee continued to follow through on two resolutions initiated by BikeWalkLee and adopted by the MPO Board in December 2010 as part of their 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), that provided concrete action steps to promote 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.

The focus in 2014 was on developing the building blocks, consistent with the 2010 resolutions, that go into the development of the 2040 LRTP, which must be adopted by the MPO Board in December 2015.

- Since 2010, BikeWalkLee has advocated for land use scenario planning and participated in the MPO’s efforts in 2013-2014 to develop three scenarios with extensive public and stakeholder input. BikeWalkLee also advocated for the rail feasibility study as part of the 2010 MPO resolutions, and participated in the 2012-2013 efforts to develop the study and advocated for the report’s approval by the Board, which was accomplished in November 2013.

- During 2014, BikeWalkLee played a leadership role in working with other community groups and meeting with individual MPO Board members advocating for land use Scenario C. This scenario, which best supports a balanced multi-modal transportation system consistent with complete streets and livable communities principles, was overwhelming approved by the MPO Board in June. The land use scenarios work is now forming the basis for evaluating transportation projects for inclusion in the 2014 LRTP, and in providing local agencies with valuable information for integration of long-term transportation, land use, and economic development decision-making.

- In 2014 BikeWalkLee 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.
  - Develop a project application submission and review process that requires each proposed project to be evaluated based on the board’s goals and objective criteria, following the Nashville example.

“Through a collaborative effort of many stakeholders, a funding solution was found to continue the popular LinC bus line, connecting Collier County and Bonita Springs.”

“The amazing efforts of Bike Walk Lee in helping out with my Bicycle Friendly Community visits in Lee County has forever changed how I will approach my visits in the future. From providing me with essential background information on issues to ensuring the involvement of policy makers and other community leaders (in addition to their behind the scenes work in gaining extensive media coverage), no local advocacy group has worked harder or has been more effective in maximizing what the League has to offer with these BFC visits.”

— Steve Clark, League of American Bicyclists
Lee County Horizon 2035 plan and Lee Plan amendments

BikeWalkLee 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.

- In 2014 BikeWalkLee participated in Lee County committee deliberations (with both the Local Planning Agency and the Community Sustainability Advisory Committee) on the revised transportation and land use Lee Plan elements, providing comments and specific recommendations on key elements.

- BikeWalkLee continued to promote community participation in the Horizon 2035 process through its communication network. The Horizon 2035 Plan was scheduled to be reviewed and adopted in 2013-2014; however, changes in leadership in county administration and the county commission have delayed adoption of the plan, which has been under development since 2010 with extensive public engagement.

Advocacy for expanded bike/ped facilities and investments

Since 2010, over 150 miles of new sidewalks, bike lanes/shared use path facilities have been constructed throughout Lee County.

- In 2014, the city of Cape Coral, in collaboration with the Cape Coral Bike-Ped (CCBP) group, completed the 90-mile bike routes system, with all signage installed by the end of the year, a major accomplishment made possible through a public/private partnership.

- Bonita Springs completed the Shangri-La Road extension (0.8 mile) that included four-foot bike lanes and a six-foot sidewalk.

- Also in 2014 Sanibel completed the new 1.25-mile Shipley and Pond Apple Trails; and the new path extension from Chamber of Commerce on Causeway Road to Periwinkle Dairy Queen crosswalk.

- With BikeWalkLee’s sustained involvement and advocacy, the Lee MPO continued to request increased funding for bike/ped projects. The FDOT five-year work plan includes funds for several BikeWalkLee 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. This year, FDOT funds were added in the fifth year for a planning study for a pathway to connect Cape Coral to the path system on Pine Island, a project championed by BikeWalkLee, CCBP and the residents of Pine Island.

- In total, the five-year work plan for the Lee MPO funds 58 more miles of sidewalks and pathways, 9 miles of bike lanes, and 13 miles of off-road pathways.

- Worked with the Lee MPO Executive Committee and staff to track the TIGER grant implementation process during 2014, which resulted in awards for the contract teams responsible for planning and constructing the project. Design and planning work will get underway in 2015, with construction in 2016.

- Lee DOT’s five-year capital improvement plan (CIP) includes funds for complete streets projects and bike/ped facilities. Over the five-year work plan, $3.9 million is budgeted for stand-alone bike/ped projects, and all road projects planned for the upcoming five years include bike/ped facilities.

- BikeWalkLee’s top funding priority for the transportation CIP, the Estero Blvd. Improvement project in Fort Myers Beach, continues to be a county commission priority. This project will provide much needed sidewalks and bike lanes and improved transit to make it safer for all road users. This $50 million project is still in the planning stages, with construction to be done in segments over the next 10-15 years. BikeWalkLee continues to advocate for this project to be fully funded and completed in a shorter timeframe.

- The new Fiddlesticks Blvd. shared use path, championed by the community and BikeWalkLee and approved by the county commission in 2013, was designed in 2014 and is scheduled to be constructed in 2015.

- Following the Fiddlesticks community successful efforts, in 2014 the communities along Palomino Lane (opposite Fiddlesticks off Daniels Parkway) organized to press the county for a shared use path on Palomino Lane due to major safety concerns. They successfully worked out a creative funding approach with county commissioners, Lee DOT, BPAC, and the city of Fort Myers, which was approved by the board in April. However, it will take 10-15 years before sufficient impact fees are available in the account to construct this shared use path.

- BikeWalkLee prepared a comprehensive data analysis of trends in LeeDOT funding of standalone bike/ped projects for BPAC’s consideration for its December agenda discussion of its proposal to request additional funds for these projects from county commission. The report documented the shortfall in the BPAC formula vs. the actual received; documented that actual expenditures for bike/ped projects were substantially below the budgeted funds; analyzed how the investments have eroded over time due to population growth and inflation; and how LeeDOT investments compare to other jurisdictions in Lee County and throughout the county. In early January, BPAC voted to send a letter to county commission recommending $2 M a year for stand-alone bike/ped projects.

Cyclist Kelly Bishop enjoys a ride on the Veterans route, complete with wayfinding signs, of the newly completed Cape Coral 90-mile bike route system.
Advocacy for improved transit services

In 2014 BikeWalkLee's transit priority was for the county to restore last year's LeeTran service cuts (which reduced evening and weekend service), to secure funding for the LinC bus line connecting Lee and Collier counties (needed to replace the expiring FDOT grant), and for no further transit cuts to be included in the FY 2014-2015 budget.

Throughout the year, BikeWalkLee, in partnership with other supporter organizations (including Southwest Florida Council of the Blind, Center for Independent Living Gulf Coast, Healthy Lee Coalition, Audubon Society of Southwest Florida, Responsible Growth Management Council, and Spikowski Planning Associates), demonstrated to the county that cuts were having negative impacts on the transit system overall and on the individual lives of our citizens who rely on transit to get to work and lead independent and productive lives. As a result of the community-wide requests to restore transit services, the 2014-2015 budget adopted by the county commission restored last year's transit cuts. The next step is for the county to explore ways to expand and improve its transit services in order to meet the long-term needs of our community.

BikeWalkLee, along with other supporter organizations, supported the proposed LeeTran fare increase provided that the increased revenues be used exclusively to improve and expand the current LeeTran services. In September the board approved the fare increases and agreed to invest a portion of the additional fare revenue in new service in Lehigh Acres and Cape Coral, as proposed by the disability groups and supported by BikeWalkLee.

BikeWalkLee has been a long-time supporter of the LinC connection between Collier County and Bonita Springs. With grant funding scheduled to end in fall 2014, in the fall 2013 BikeWalkLee began to urge the various stakeholders (the Lee and Collier MPOs, LeeTran, the Lee County commission, FDOT, and Bonita Springs officials) to work together to find a funding solution. As a result of a collaborative effort with all stakeholders, a funding solution was found to keep the LinC line running.

In April BikeWalkLee spoke in support of a proposed replacement facility for the trolley “Park and Ride” facility that serves Fort Myers Beach, and raised concerns to the MPO committees and MPO Board in early January when the existing facility was closed without advance notification and without either a temporary or permanent replacement site just as peak season got underway. As a result, county commissioners took action to find a short-term solution; however, a long-term solution is two years away.
Advocacy for bike tourism

BikeWalkLee has long touted the economic benefits of having a safe and connected countywide biking and walking network, which allows Lee County to promote bike tourism. The $10 million federal TIGER grant awarded in 2013 sets the stage for enhanced economic benefits from bike tourism, which is big business both nationally and globally.

During 2014, in response to BikeWalkLee’s continuing efforts to gain the Lee County Visitors and Convention Bureau’s (VCB) support for promoting bike tourism began to yield more results. VCB staffers participated in the national bike tourism conference in November for the first time, where they learned about successful bike tourism efforts in other states and communities.

Bike tourism gained more traction in Lee County in 2014 with the recent completion of Cape Coral’s 90-mile bicycle routes system, thanks to an outstanding partnership between the Cape Coral Bike-Ped group and the city of Cape Coral. Building on these successes, FDOT District 1 approved the Lee MPO’s request for funding to conduct a feasibility study for a future shared use path that will connect the Cape Coral system to Pine Island.

BikeWalkLee has also advocated at the state level for an economic development strategy focused on the bike tourism market. With BikeWalkLee’s support, in the 2014 State Legislative session the Lee County Legislative Delegation voted for the Coast-to-Coast Connector Trail (C2C), a 275-mile trail from Cape Canaveral National Seashore to St. Petersburg that will enhance economic development through bike tourism. For the first time, Gov. Scott and his administration are taking a leadership role in pursuing a bike tourism strategy.

There are now long-term plans under way to develop a Southwest Coast Connector Trail that would start in the Tampa/St. Pete area (where it would join the C2C trail) and come down to Naples, linking up with the planned River of Grass Greenway Trail that will connect to Miami. BikeWalkLee is participating in the Lee and Collier County MPO bike/ped committees efforts to identify the best route for that trail.

BikeWalkLee continued to promote bike tourism through BikeWalkLee columns, blog posts, and our communications network, and through building relationships with other groups working on these issues, including the Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation.
Advocacy at the federal and state levels

**Federal:**
- BikeWalkLee, along with national and local advocates across the country, was disappointed that USDOT national performance management measures proposed in spring 2014 did not include a separate performance measure for non-motorized modes (i.e. bike/ped). BikeWalkLee submitted formal comments asking FHWA to add a non-motorized safety performance measure so that specific performance goals would be set for reducing the number of bicyclists and pedestrians killed on our roadways to ensure that states and MPOs are held accountable for results. The national campaign was finally successful in December, when Congress took action.

- Through BikeWalkLee’s close working relationships with the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) and involvement as reviewers for its Bicycle Friendly Community Program, Lee County was selected as one of the 100 communities that LAB will be visiting in early 2015, as part of its new initiative to bring bicycle-friendly expertise directly to the local level. BikeWalkLee worked with LAB on setting up individual community visits in Sanibel, Fort Myers, Bonita Springs and Cape Coral for mid-January 2015. These visits to Lee County and its cities provided some hands-on technical assessment of its bicycling infrastructure and provide an opportunity to learn about best practices from other communities, with the goal of making Lee County more bicycle friendly.

**State:**
- BikeWalkLee maintained a 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. In December, Secretary Hattaway was named one of the nation’s nine most outstanding Public Officials of the Year for his efforts to make Florida a safer place for pedestrians and cyclists.

- BikeWalkLee has long advocated for a statewide complete streets policy as the best framework for improving bike/ped safety, and was gratified by FDOT’s September 2014 issuance of a statewide complete streets policy and implementation plan. The implementation plan being led by Secretary Hattaway will be incorporated into the various planning and policy manuals and guidelines, with major changes in the offing — from a context-based approach to bike/ped facilities; changes in design speed policies; an increasing emphasis on innovative tools such as road diets and roundabouts; and updated traffic laws. A transportation paradigm shift is underway in FDOT, which should encourage local communities (including Lee County) to follow suit.

FDOT Secretary District 1 Billy Hattaway participates in the January 2014 Tour de Cape, and brings the Florida DOT safety message.
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 BikeWalkLee representatives in each jurisdiction. This has strengthened the countywide efforts to make progress on complete streets.

At the end of 2014, Estero became an independent municipality, bringing the total to six in Lee County. BikeWalkLee has worked closely with the Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL) since its launch in 2009 and has been working closely with Estero leaders as they lay the groundwork for electing a city council in March 2015.

BikeWalkLee, along with the Urban Land Institute, ECCL, and FGCU (all BikeWalkLee supporter organizations) participated in the March 12th ULI workshop, All Eyes on Estero, which demonstrated the importance of complete streets — a walkable/bikeable/transit accessible healthy community — to the future of Estero. The forum received excellent media coverage and demonstrated that Estero will be playing a larger leadership role in bringing these complete streets principles to life in Lee County.

BikeWalkLee representatives serve on the bike/ped advisory committees/safety committees/community panels, and advocacy organizations in their respective jurisdictions. This year BikeWalkLee continued to recognize 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 award to Bonita Springs City Council and staff.

Cape Coral:

The City of Cape Coral and Cape Coral Bike-Ped (CCBP)’s innovative public/private partnership to create a safe and connected system of more than 90 miles of cycling routes within the City resulted in completion of the award-winning project by the end of 2014. A new city website, “Cape Coral Bicycling” (www.CapeCoral.net/Bicycling), was created in 2014, which contains interactive maps of the routes with downloadable detailed Ride with GPS maps for each route. The website is already making a difference in attracting tourists and informing residents.

CCBP developed “Cape Coral Bicycling” brochures with a full map of the routes, with grant assistance from the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau. The brochures are now available at local bike shops and elsewhere, including interstate rest stops.

With funds raised by the CCBP-City partnership, 13 kiosks with maps are being installed along the 90-mile route, with the map and link to the website.
BikeWalkLee worked closely with CCBP to support and publicize their efforts, and collaborated on a bike tourism strategy.

The third annual Bicycle Safety Rodeo was held at Oasis Elementary School, sponsored by the City’s Oasis Charter Elementary and Christa McAuliffe Charter Elementary Schools. BikeWalkLee helped get the Rodeo started and has been a sponsoring partner all three years.

Bike/ped safety took center stage in Cape Coral in 2014 as a result of several tragic bike/ped fatalities involving teens, which galvanized the community, with calls for action by elected officials, agencies, and law enforcement to make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists, esp. school age children, to use the streets. BikeWalkLee along with other safety partners have been actively engaged with Cape Coral officials to come up with an action plan. As a result, the Cape Coral Police launched a bike patrol program and won an Florida DOT High Visibility Enforcement grant emphasizing safety education which will be implemented in 2015. Council is considering proposals to lower the speed limit on neighborhood streets, to develop a plan to construct more sidewalks and paths; and to implement the relevant action plan elements of the MPO Bike/Ped Safety Action Plan. Waterman Media is taking a leadership role in developing bike/ped safety public service announcements to air next year.

Sanibel:

In 2014, the City of Sanibel was elevated to “Silver” status Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. Sanibel is one of only four Florida communities with this status. BikeWalkLee participated in the application review process and joined city officials, Chamber and VCB officials, Sanibel Bicycle Club members, and many other stakeholders in the celebration event in November.

In 2014 Sanibel continued to expand and improve its path network, completing two new projects and receiving grants for two more in the future. First, they completed the new 1.25-mile Shipley and Pond Apple Trails; and a new path extension from the Chamber of Commerce on Causeway Road to the Periwinkle Dairy Queen crosswalk. Sanibel also received grants for both a new Bowman’s Beach shared use path; and new SUP facilities connecting the Ding Darling National Wildlife Preserve with the Sanibel path system.

The Sanibel Bicycle Club and the city of Sanibel are collaborating on a bike safety video project, launched with seed money from Lee County’s Visitors & Convention Bureau, and supplemented with contributions from the city, bike rental
merchants, the local chamber, and the Club’s Trails in Motion Fund. The Sanibel Bicycle Club is project managing the project, which is scheduled for completion in mid-2015. Broad dissemination of the video is planned through YouTube, tourism, city, county and business websites and social media.

In 2014, the city of Sanibel took several actions to further integrate the mantra “bikeable/walkable Sanibel” into city policies. First, it issued an inter- and intra-connectivity guidance, which focuses on developing safe access to and from the shared use path system into local businesses and establishments. It also changed parking rules to take into account the many patrons who come to shops by bike and foot; therefore, fewer car parking spaces are needed. The city is also working with community stakeholders on a major civic core redevelopment proposal, which, when adopted, will greatly expand the connectivity that is embodied in the Dunlop path.

**Fort Myers:**

- BikeWalkLee 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 Bike/Ped Advisory Board has completed its review of this manual and it will go to the Local Planning Agency before final vote on adoption by the city council in 2015.

**Bonita Springs:**

- The Bonita City Council and staff received BikeWalkLee’s 2014 Complete Streets Champion of the Year award in December for its embrace of a comprehensive complete streets approach — from adoption of a complete streets policy in October, integration of complete streets concepts in the downtown redevelopment project, to its plans for a visioning study of Bonita Beach Road to ensure it is designed for all road users. Through its discussions and actions throughout the year, the city council, staff, consultants, and citizens of Bonita Springs have demonstrated that they understand the value of complete streets and are committed to integrating those concepts in various city policies and projects in visionary ways.
With adoption of the complete streets policy in October, the city has quickly turned its attention to drafting amendments to the Local Development Codes and revising other policies and procedure, essential to implementation of a complete streets policy.

Bonita’s accomplishments were also recognized by News-Pres in its annual awards competition, with the Bonita City Council being selected as a finalist for the Public Official of the Year award for its efforts in support of complete streets and a livable community vision, under the headline of “Council’s vision makes it a cut above.”

**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. The “Be seen on Fort Myers Beach” campaign continues, with publication of a revised brochure which was broadly distributed, and more safety banners were put up along Estero Blvd.

In 2014, the city installed its third rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) at another critical crosswalk. The Public Safety Committee is participating in the county’s Estero Blvd. Improvement Project and has presented suggestions for improved traffic flow and safety for Estero Blvd. The committee has identified Lovell/Estero Blvd. as a critical intersection and initiated a pedestrian controlled experiment to better understand the need for improvements. The committee continues to press for improved lighting for pedestrian safety.

BikeWalkLee participated in the San Carlos corridor visioning workshop, which highlighted bike/ped safety as a priority; and its rep is a member of the town’s redevelopment team, which will integrate the Estero Blvd. project and the San Carlos Rd. project with land use plans at the entrance of the island.

As outlined in earlier section, BikeWalkLee’s No. 1 priority road project is the Estero Blvd. improvement project and we will continue to work closely with Town Council and county commission advocating for full funding, a shorter construction timeframe, 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. BikeWalkLee continues to work with the community and other partners on the follow-up to the 2013 two-day walking audit and design workshops with national experts from the Local Government Commission.
(through a Project for Public Spaces/EPA technical assistance grant) to provide feedback on safer walking, biking, transit access and neighborhood revitalization.

■ In 2014, the community developed a community-wide Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan with prioritized projects. As a result of the walking audit, FDOT has prioritized improvements in the area, with one “quick fix” problem implemented in 2014. In addition, the MPO’s BPCC has ranked as No. 1 funding priority for bike/ped funds the Tice Elementary School sidewalks project; however, the projects were not funded in the 2014 FDOT work plan.

■ The community is in the process of finalizing its comprehensive plan and land development codes for submission and approval by the county commission. At the end of 2014, the Lee Department of Health, in partnership with Florida Gulf Coast University, the Tice Historic Community, and many other community stakeholders, including BikeWalkLee, received a Health Impact Assessment grant to be used in the Tice community to conduct an assessment of the health impacts of a community connectivity plan.

■ The Florida Department of Health Lee County chose the Tice Historical Community as the subject for its PACE-EH program. The PACE-EH program is a collaborative project between the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Association for County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The program stands for “Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health” (PACE EH). This project puts the community at the center of identifying local environmental health issues, setting priorities for action, targeting populations most at risk, and addressing identified issues. Safe, multi-modal transportation is one of those activities identified by the community as worthy of action.

■ Florida Gulf Coast University.

■ BikeWalkLee continues to monitor activities at FGCU related to multi-modal trips and access to campus. Our advocacy continues to focus on safe bicycle access to the campus on the

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). (listed in alphabetical order)

• Sarah Baker (BikeWalkLee’s Bonita Springs representative)
• Dr. Margaret Banyan (also BikeWalkLee’s FGCU representative)
• Dr. Cindy Banyai
• Bruce Butcher (BikeWalkLee’s Fort Myers Beach representative)
• Steve Chupack (BikeWalkLee’s Cape Coral representative)
• Kate Gooderham
• Ken Gooderham
• Darla Letourneau
• Dan Moser
• Ann Pierce (also BikeWalkLee’s Fort Myers representative)
• Steve Rodgers
• Tom Sharbaugh (BikeWalkLee’s Sanibel representative)
Analysis and action

One of the strengths of BikeWalkLee is its rigorous research and analysis which is provided pro bono to policymakers and staff for their use in decision-making related to transportation, complete streets, livable communities and related policy and funding issues. We also provide reports that highlight actions at the federal, state and local level.

Summary of BikeWalkLee reports

As mentioned in earlier sections of this accomplishments report, BikeWalkLee wrote and distributed reports and analysis on various topics during 2014: Dangerous by Design report — Lee County analysis; Report on Lee County funding trends for bike/ped stand-alone projects; report on need to reconcile county administration budget projections with MPO 2040 LRTP; Analysis of funding for Homestead Road project; Analysis of Lee County Transportation Spending: 2005-2013; various reports and analyses throughout the year re: the transportation CIP revenue estimates and impact fees; long-term transportation funding realities, strategies for the 2040 LRTP; and county budget proposals.

- BikeWalkLee also writes letters to elected officials and makes comments at public meetings re: comments and recommendations on various pending proposals, policies, budgets, and legislation at local, state, and national level; and communicates these position statements with the media and BikeWalkLee communications network.

- BikeWalkLee members Margaret Banyan and Vitor Suguri analyzed, wrote, and published a rapid Health Impact Assessment on the Ortiz Road Widening Project. This was published on the Pew Charitable Trust’s webpage at http://www.pewtrusts.org/hip/ortizavenueroadwidening.html. The health impacts considered by the HIA included outcomes related to physical safety, air quality, physical activity, and social and community cohesion. The HIA offered a series of recommendations, including reducing the speed limit to mitigate physical safety risks, enhancing the walking and biking environment, and incorporating design measures to enhance community connectivity and social cohesion.

Expansion of advocacy & outreach

- BikeWalkLee 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 (488 friends) and Twitter pages (688 followers). BikeWalkLee continues to improve and expand its connection with its supporters, with an increasing number of followers.

- Use BikeWalkLee’s extensive communications system to share local, state, and national information across the various agencies and organizations throughout the county so that developments outside their immediate work environment are available on a real time basis, allowing new ideas and innovations to be considered and adopted more rapidly. The
communications system is also used to highlight positive developments in Lee County and make sure good news from local efforts are highlighted in national newsletters, blogs, press stories, national reports, etc.

- The BikeWalkLee 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 at local, state, and national level 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), 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 2014 in three awards received by BikeWalkLee steering group members, Darla Letourneau and Ann Pierce. Darla Letourneau was named by WGCU (local PBS station) as among the 14 MAKERS of 2014: Women who Make Southwest Florida for her BikeWalkLee work; and was awarded Florida Bicycle Association’s Citizen Advocate of the Year award in 2014. Ann Pierce was named the 2014 Citizen Volunteer of the Year by the Injury Prevention Coalition. Dan Moser was also recognized by the News-Press ‘People of Influence’ series, as a “roadway safety champion, a tireless volunteer and founding member of BikeWalkLee.”

- 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, BikeWalkLee was a finalist for the News-Press “People of Influence” series, as a “roadway safety champion, a tireless volunteer and founding member of BikeWalkLee.”

- 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.
# 2014 priorities scorecard

In last year’s report, BikeWalkLee laid out its priority list for local/regional/state governments and agencies in 2014. Below is the summary scorecard of how local and regional entities performed against BikeWalkLee’s priorities.

## INTEGRATED PLANNING:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lee County commission will adopt the 2035 Horizon Plan comp plan amendments, consistent with the EAR.</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPO Board will select a land use scenario option that supports a balanced multi-modal 2040 LRTP.</td>
<td>FA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee County commission will adopt the county’s proposed Sustainability Plan.</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## QUALITY OF LIFE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lee County commission will review and reinstate funding for infrastructure through impact and/or mobility fees.</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County, municipal and state agencies and officials will incorporate bike tourism in economic development strategies.</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## TRANSIT:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County commission provides adequate funding of transit, including restoration of evening and weekend service cuts, improvements in the Route 60 line, and makes no further transit budget cuts in 2015.</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuation of the LinC bus line connecting Lee and Collier counties through shared funding by Lee County, the City of Bonita Springs, and Collier County, with MPO Board and Florida DOT support.</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## SAFETY:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPO Board, Lee County jurisdictions, local law enforcement officials, media and other stakeholder agencies and groups should make implementation of the MPO’s Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Action Plan a top priority.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local law enforcement leaders, media and other stakeholder agencies and leaders, including the MPO and Florida DOT, will launch a countywide enforcement and education campaign in 2014.</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee County Legislative Delegation support for state legislation 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.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**BikeWalkLee 2015 priorities**

BikeWalkLee’s priority list for local, regional and state governments and agencies in 2015.

### Integrated planning

**VISION:** Innovative and integrated land use and transportation planning can enhance our county's livability while encouraging creative new development and redevelopment. The challenge is how to plan and manage for the population growth (1 million population by 2040 — up 370,000) in a way that meets the infrastructure needs, need for green spaces, and to locate the growth where infrastructure already exists, while preserving and enhancing the quality of life.

- The Lee County Commission must re-establish its long-term vision and evaluate some of its core policies and programs that have been put on hold. Adoption of the delayed 2035 Horizon Plan is essential, consistent with the vision expressed by the public. The Lee Plan serves as a "road map" for the public to know how the county will address a wide variety of issues. The current Lee Plan encourages unsustainable development and the resulting negative consequences for energy consumption, health, housing and quality of life. The 2035 Horizon vision will move our county in a new direction – sustainable, livable and economically viable.

- The Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) board must adopt a 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) based on the land-use scenario adopted in 2014. It should be based on realistic revenue estimates, ensuring highest priority projects consistent with board goals are funded while improving existing facilities before expanding capacity. We welcome innovative approaches such as road diets and roundabouts, a more robust transit system and improved and expanded biking and walking infrastructure, all in support of a balanced multi-modal transportation system consistent with complete streets and livable communities.

### 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. 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.

- County commissioners must reinstate funding for infrastructure through impact 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. This could include a transition to mobility fees as a replacement for road impact fees, to encourage multimodal transportation options, in-fill development and economic renewal countywide.

- County and local governments must support bike tourism efforts to promote both the county and Southwest Florida. The Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau should incorporate bike tourism into Lee County’s tourism strategy.

- The Lee County Legislative delegation must support incorporation of bike tourism into Florida’s tourism economic development strategy.
and supports legislation and funding for the statewide regional connector trails, including the Southwest Coast Connector Trail in Southwest Florida.

**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.

- Lee MPO must adopt 2040 LRTP that reflects a strategy for expanding and improving our transit system so that it is robust and attracts users.
- All necessary government entities must increase LeeTran funding by at least 5% to improve the services on the current transit system (with increasing headways the first priority), providing an effective option for residents, workers and visitors. In addition, 100% of the fare increase effective January 2015 must be dedicated to improving service on the existing system.
- The Lee County Legislative Delegation must take actions to focus both on how to maintain the existing transit system and how to grow it into a more robust system. Delegation members are urged to support funding for medical transit services and work with local governments and service providers to make permanent changes in Medicaid program to fix this problem.

**Safety**

**VISION:** A zero-fatality transportation system for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout Lee County (Lee MPO’s BPSAP vision, adopted October 2013). 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.

- Lee MPO must establish a baseline from which to set goals and measure progress towards the Bike/Ped Safety Action Plan (BPSAP) goal of reducing pedestrian and bicycle fatalities and severe injury crashes by 6% in 2015, with the goal moving up a percentage point each year, reaching a 10% reduction goal in 2020. Measuring the county’s performance against these numerical goals should be widely communicated with the public and used to reassess strategies if they are not resulting in reducing bike/ped injury and fatality crashes.
- MPO, local jurisdictions and all stakeholders must complete implementation of the MPO’s Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety Action Plan short-term action items.
- Local law enforcement leaders, media and other stakeholder agencies (including the MPO and Florida DOT) must undertake an effective and coordinated countywide enforcement and education campaign that raises public awareness and improves the behavior of all road users.
- The Lee County Legislative Delegation must support Florida DOT statewide bike/ped safety campaign and its implementation of the agency’s new “complete streets” policy, including FDOT’s update to traffic laws so they are easier to understand and enforce.
- The Lee County Legislative Delegation must support strengthening a ban on texting
while driving by making it a primary offense; support the bike/ped safety bill by Rep. Passidomo and endorsed by the Collier County delegation; and oppose any legislation that would worsen existing road safety problems, such as last year’s bill to raise speed limits on Florida roads.

Complete streets
VISION: Lee County becomes 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. The complete streets movement is about changing the transportation paradigm from a car-centric focus to a multi-modal focus.

- FDOT’s implementation of its 2014 statewide complete streets policy provides Lee government entities with the motivation and tools to implement their adopted complete streets policies consistent with their adopted action plans and schedules, or the inspiration to initiate the adoption of a policy if one does not yet exist.

- Jurisdictions with complete streets policies (Lee County, Fort Myers, Bonita Springs) must revise their Land Development Codes (LDCs), Administrative Codes, and agency policies and practices required to implement complete streets policies. Complete Streets implementation plans must have timelines and deliverables, with performance against the plan tracked.

- The Lee MPO’s federal TIGER grant Complete Streets Initiative Project must get under way in 2015 and stay on target with the project deadlines, consistent with the key project goals — connectivity and safety — and, with the support and active participation of all stakeholders.

Bike/ped facilities
VISION: To develop a countywide network of connected bicycle and pedestrian facilities to transform Lee County into a more bicycle and pedestrian friendly community. Implementation of the countywide bike/ped master plan adopted by the MPO Board in 2011 requires commitment by local jurisdictions and agencies along with increased funding.

- MPO must coordinate the countywide progress towards implementing the recommendations in its Countywide Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan, while local jurisdictions must incorporate the master plan the recommendations into their own master plans – with measurable results.

- Lee County Commissioners must substantially increase funds for stand-alone bike/ped projects (retrofits) to restore funds reduced during the recession, and begin work on the extensive backlog of Bike/Ped Advisory Committee-approved and -prioritized projects.

- Local jurisdictions must increase funding for sidewalk, path, and bike lane projects.

- Florida DOT must increase funding in the work plan for stand-alone bike/ped projects.
Thanks to our BikeWalkLee supporter organizations!

- AARP of Florida
- Acme Bicycle Shop
- Alva Inc.
- 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
- Center for Independent Living (CIL) Gulf Coast
- College Parkway Redevelopment Group
- The Conservancy of Southwest Florida
- Jim Dodson Law
- Engels Bicycles International
- Ensite Inc.
- Estero Council of Community Leaders
- FGCU Student Planning Association
- Florida Bicycle Association
- Florida Greenways & Trails Foundation Inc.
- 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
- Go-Girl Cycling
- 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
- Lee Public Voice
- Lehigh Acres Bicycle Club
- Lehigh Acres Community Council
- Missing in America Veterans Recovery Program
- Naples Pathways Coalition
- 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 Wilbur 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
- Tice Historic Community Planning Panel
- Trek Bicycle Store of Estero
- Urban Land Institute (ULI) of Southwest Florida
- 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
- Strong Towns
- Transportation for America

Total of 68 supporter organizations (6 added in 2014) and 9 national partners (1 added in 2014)