

## May 16, 2013 Sustainability Stewards of Broward Workshop Summary

The Sustainability Stewards of Broward (SSB) is collaborative peer network of municipal staff and other interested parties who come together to discuss best practices in sustainability occurring in Broward County and the greater South Florida region.

The topic of the SSB Workshop on May 16, 2013 was *Sustainable Transportation, moving our initiatives forward*. Forty (40) individuals attended the half-day workshop, which was co-hosted by Broward County's Energy and Sustainability Program and the City of Miramar. Held in the beautiful Miramar Cultural Center, in the heart of an active and continuously developing TOC, the workshop focused on how we can take steps together to build partnerships, streamline processes, and lay the foundation needed for a healthy, equitable, efficient, and sustainable community through good transportation choices.

Best management practices in transportation and land use planning and electric vehicle charging infrastructure planning were shared. Local examples of implementing the new Complete Streets guidelines, and an update from the B-Cycle bike-sharing program were also shared. Speakers included:

- Jill Horwitz, Broward County
- Elsi Rose, City of Miramar
- Patrice Gillespie Smith, Urban Health Partnerships
- Amanda Martinez, City of Deerfield Beach
- Mark Horowitz, Broward County Highway Construction and Engineering
- Kathryn Moore, B-Cycle
- Tim Garling, Broward County Transportation Department
- Christine Heshmati, Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition

The workshop included four rounds of small group discussion on the topics introduced during the presentations. Discussions were technical, productive, and lively!

**Some of the highlights from the small group discussion are:**

### **Transportation and Land Use**

The conversation included the need to find a long term sustainable funding source for transit, and how to link complete streets to this funding source. The discussion focused on the importance of transit markets (that transit needs to serve specific markets to be successful) and that density and urban form are critical to the success of transit. The idea of launching a public outreach campaign to reach the 98% of people who do not ride transit (but we want to support it) so they can understand the benefits, such as reducing congestion, reducing green-house gas emissions, and other public health and safety benefits (of increasing daily exercise and reducing long-term climate change impacts).

## Complete Streets

“Complete Streets” is a program which aims to provide access to all modes of transportation through our street system. Incorporating bicycle lanes, transit infrastructure, and pedestrian ways along with vehicular travel is a way to make our streets efficient, equitable, and safe for all users.

The Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is creating a model plan framework based upon the City of Deerfield Beach complete streets plan for other municipalities to use in implementing the new guidelines, adopted by the County this year. Some specific ideas generated during the discussion include:

- Review connectivity maps to identify gaps and make connections.
- Level of Service for road system are presently based upon automobile use only, the system should be amended to include a “Multi-Model Level of Service”
- FDOT and MPO should coordinate on lane elimination program so that MPO models for future roads can be used to support FDOT efforts.
- Bring Fire Rescue into the discussion as they require wider travel and turning lanes as well as sufficient road width to stabilize vehicles when in use.
- Gated communities need to provide easy access to and from communities for residents to encourage residents to utilize adjacent roadways for travel by bicycle.
- Education and outreach to communities for a shared vision.
- Finding funds to support the program is an on-going challenge.
- Consider different “levels” of Complete Streets to reflect diversity of uses adjacent to the roadway
  - Market Place – Las Olas Boulevard style
  - Heavy Commercial – Oakland Park Boulevard
  - Suburban – Weston or Davie residential areas
  - Collegiate – Davie Road or College Avenue in Davie

## Electric Vehicles

This discussion included the value of the Electric Vehicle Changing Infrastructure Plan recently completed by the South Florida Clean Cities Coalition through a U.S. Department of Energy grant. According to the report, Southeast Florida could have as many as 74,000 plug-in electric vehicles (PEVs) on its roads in the next decade, up from 1,074 today. Regionally, widespread adoption of plug-in electric vehicles – whether they are battery-electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, or extended-range electric vehicle – will bring the Region and its residents several key benefits, such as:

- ***Economic advantages, including lower fuel and operating costs for owners:*** Owners can expect to fuel up for 80 percent less than they’d pay at the gas pump in Southeast Florida.

- ***Environmental and health benefits from reduced emissions:*** Battery electric vehicles emit 70 percent fewer emissions than gas-powered cars in the Region, when considering upstream emissions from power plants.
- ***Improved energy security, due to lower reliance on foreign fuels:*** Less than 1 percent of the Region's electricity is generated from oil.
- ***Better utilization of the Region's electrical infrastructure:*** There is sufficient electrical capacity in the grid to support widespread adoption of PEVs in Southeast Florida.

Ideas and concerns shared through the discussion included:

EV infrastructure is important for producers to be willing to introduce electric vehicles into our market area, and for consumers to feel confident that infrastructure exists to support their purchase and use of the product. Concerns regarding the cost of electric vehicles was raised. Grants and the pooling of resources from the public and private sector were recommended solutions. One suggestion was that FPL could subsidize costs until there is more saturation in the Broward market. Additionally, auto manufacturers can sponsor electric vehicle charging stations. Equally important, Broward County can provide a brand for all municipal charging stations for marketing purposes. A few communities are leading the way toward an electric vehicle future. These communities, the City of Coconut Creek and the City of Dania Beach, already have car charging at select municipal facilities and the City of Lauderhill recently considered a resolution requiring new homes be built with the capacity and infrastructure for electric vehicle charging.

## **B-Cycle**

B-cycle is a "vender" which is subcontracted through Broward County and provides a bicycle sharing service. This program promotes bicycle usage as a form of daily transportation and encourages pedestrians to take advantage of the Broward's bicycle lane system. Kiosks at stations can support advertising as well as wayfinding information. While advertising at stations is promising, advertising on the bicycles themselves is a concern in some areas as bikes may be viewed as a form of mobile advertising. Initially, placements of B-cycle stations were on city right-of-ways (ROW's). It is hoped that the program's success will now provide for additional requests from cities to place B-cycle stations on their ROW's. All current B-cycle locations are on public property except in Fort Lauderdale. When issued, permitting can take from one to six months. A municipality gives a 'blank' permit" when issued was New B-cycle stations are set-up as a network and are not planned on a 'linear' schedule for new installations. Ideas from the discussion included creating an "expedite process" where municipalities provide in-kind support by completing surveys and site permits, and that ridership surveys could provide valuable feedback and potentially contribute to Complete Streets designs. Rider safety was also discussed next; No police reports of accidents exist at this time, and B-cycling can be promoted as a safe means of transportation. It was stated during the conclusion of the B-cycle talks that the challenge for future success of this program is FUNDING.

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The workshop agenda and summary will be posted on the County's GoGreen webpage, under [Sustainability Stewards](#). If you were not able to attend, and would like the PowerPoint presentations emailed to you, email me at [jhorwitz@broward.org](mailto:jhorwitz@broward.org).

If you have additional ideas or questions, our speakers have kindly made themselves available for event follow-up. Their contact information is below.

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Thank you again to our wonderful co-host, speakers, and participants - who dedicated their time to share their stories and expertise. Some fantastic case studies were presented, and the group left inspired to take new concepts and best practice back to their municipalities to implement. By sharing our experiences, we advance all of our programs and help to move sustainability forward in our entire community.

Together, through the Sustainability Stewards of Broward, we are making Broward a more energy efficient, climate resilient, and sustainable community.

***We hope to see you at the next informative and inspiring event!***

*Jill Horwitz*

Broward County Energy and Sustainability Program