



Date: September 7, 2011

For Immediate Release

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City of St. Cloud Attains Green Government Certification *FGBC Designation Confirms Environmental Stewardship*

(Tallahassee, FL) – The Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC), a membership-based non-profit organization that administers certification standards and provides education to promote sustainable building, development and business practices, has designated the City of St. Cloud a certified Florida Green Local Government after it successfully met the sustainability standards established in the FGBC Green Local Government Certification program. St. Cloud achieved 21 percent of the applicable points, earning them a silver-level designation.

Suzanne Cook, FGBC Executive Director, said the designation demonstrates exemplary leadership by St. Cloud Mayor Rebecca Borders and other elected officials who provided the framework and support to move forward with the process that helps to better manage the cost of government. “Their leadership in this effort will help protect and conserve the community’s natural resources, enhance the efficiency of government thus reducing the cost to taxpayers, and raise public awareness about the benefits of environmental stewardship,” Cook said. “Our membership applauds the municipality's dedication and commitment to the important ideals outlined in this program.”

In order to achieve the FGBC Green Local Government Certification, St. Cloud staff, led by Michelle Orton, undertook an extensive audit of the functions performed by every department within their government. The criteria included evaluations of energy and water usage, air quality, health issues, land use, recycling and waste disposal, maintenance policies, educational programs, purchasing practices, regulatory policies, and many others. From there teams used FGBC’s online program tools to identify methods to improve the sustainability of their business practices and operations.

Cook said that there were significant and tangible accomplishments that will benefit taxpayers and the environment. “Through these efforts, there were reductions in operating costs and capital outlays, improvements in departmental communication, cooperation, and risk and asset management, a wealth of environmental benefits including measureable CO₂ reductions, and identification of programs that will improve community involvement and enhance sustainability throughout the city of St. Cloud,” Cook noted.

FGBC’s Green Local Government Certification program is the only one of its type in Florida and is endorsed by the Florida Legislature, the Florida League of Cities and the Florida League of Mayors. Cook emphasized that this level of support emanates from the fact that there is a sizeable and compelling return on investment for any municipality that chooses to initiate the process. “Depending upon the population of the community, the cost of this program is between \$2,000 and \$6,000,” she said. “The cost savings and environmental benefits that can be achieved dwarf the initial expenditure.”

In the case of St. Cloud, Cook listed just a few of the significant accomplishments that were achieved:

- Maintain an office, person, or group to coordinate current and future green activities
- New employee orientation includes the city’s commitment to the environment
- Organize green building seminars and/or training for staff and elected officials
- Train and certify select staff as certified arborists
- Employ green cleaning and maintenance procedures
- Require recycling at all local government buildings
- Develop a disaster waste management plan
- Provide city-wide chemical/hazardous waste collection
- Create a reclaimed water infrastructure
- Use LED traffic lights
- Require mitigation for consumption of natural habitat or resources
- Encourage mixed-use zoning / development
- Maintain or reduce net impervious surface area through zoning decisions
- Enact and enforce a tree preservation or land-clearing ordinance
- Enact a septic system replacement ordinance
- Enact a landscaping ordinance for new construction
- Enact open burning regulations

- Use of alternative fuel vehicles and/or bicycle patrol for urban/neighborhood areas
- Firing ranges utilize non-lead bullets or trap and collect fragments
- Police trained in crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED)
- Offer free or discounted green products to the public
- Recycle end-of-life electronic equipment and operate local government computer and equipment reuse center
- Enact policy so all computer electronic equipment purchased has conservation features
- Mandatory recycling of typical recyclables and C&D debris for homes and businesses
- Mandatory recycling program for large volumes of C&D debris
- Offer waste assessments to businesses
- Offer educational materials to increase recycling program participation
- Enforce watering restrictions during meter reads
- Enact a rain sensor ordinance applicable to all functioning automatic irrigation systems
- Create an education campaign for water use reduction (xeriscaping, rainwater collection, etc.)
- Achieve Florida Main Street Designation
- Develop a historic preservation ordinance
- Become a Tree City USA
- Take part in Florida Clean Marina program
- Operate a website dedicated to St Cloud's green program and develop environmental education content for the website, television programs, etc.
- Provide public transportation route searching via the internet
- Offer mulched yard waste to community
- Involve students in green projects within the school
- Maintain organic community gardens
- Team with tourism department on eco-tourism campaign

Since the FGBC Green Local Government Certification program was launched, 34 Florida local governments have achieved certification, with 20 others registered and in the process of certification. The program is performance based, not prescriptive, and all of the certified governments have found that many of their existing programs and policies contributed to the point total needed for certification. "This program is an opportunity for local governments to establish sustainable practices that can be carried out on a systematic basis, and sets in motion

a process that will extend beyond election terms and protect the community for years to come,” Cook said.

Presentation of the award to the City of St. Cloud officials will be held on September 22, 2011 at 6:30 p.m., during the city council meeting in Building A, Third Floor, City Council Chamber, 1300 9th Street, St. Cloud, FL.

The Florida Green Building Coalition is an independent non-profit organization that was established in 2000 to promote green building in Florida. FGBC’s membership is comprised of individuals and businesses from all areas of the building industry including research, design, materials, products, construction, inspection, marketing, finance and sales. For more information about the FGBC Green Local Governments designation visit www.floridagreenbuilding.org.

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