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Tallahassee Attains Green Government Recertification *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 recertified the City of Tallahassee as a Florida Green Local Government after it successfully met the sustainability standards established in the FGBC Green Local Government 5-year recertification program. Tallahassee achieved 57.6 percent of its 363 applicable points, earning it a gold-level designation. At the time of its recertification, the city of Tallahassee had achieved the second highest score of all local governments in the state certified under the FGBC program.

Originally certified in December of 2007 at the silver level, Tallahassee later strived for and achieved gold-level designation in 2009. At that time, Tallahassee was the first "city" to obtain a gold-level designation.

Suzanne Cook, FGBC Executive Director, said the designation demonstrates exemplary leadership by Mayor John Marks 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, Tallahassee staff, led by Adam Jacobs, Strategic Programs Evaluator for Environmental Policy and Energy Resources, 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 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," 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 Tallahassee, Cook listed just a few of the significant accomplishments that were achieved:

- Developed reduction plans and monitors local government energy use, water use, and solid waste generation
- Developed an Environmental Purchasing Program (EPP) for the local government
- Implemented an ISO 14001 Environmental Management System
- Adopted a green standard as official minimum criteria for new and renovated government buildings
- Utilizes Renewable Energy on energy efficient local government buildings
- Includes green principles in new employee orientation by providing education on available energy saving features, recycling guidelines and alternative commuting options and incentives
- Offers free or discounted green products to the public
- Maintains an active Florida Yards & Neighborhood program or other home owner/builder/developer outreach program
- Requires mitigation for consumption of natural habitat resources

- Enacts and enforces a Florida Friendly landscaping ordinance for new construction
- Utilizes alternative fuel vehicles and bicycle patrol for urban/neighborhood areas
- Operates and maintains a green fleet program
- Firing ranges utilize non-lead bullets or trap and collect fragments
- Fire departments review training operations and conserve water where appropriate
- Police trained in crime prevention through environmental design
- As a utility, the City offers green power, renewable energy credits and distributed generation incentives
- Initiated a community wide energy efficiency challenge
- Offers incentives for construction of green affordable housing
- Developed environmental education content for the city's websites, TV programs, etc.
- Reduced emissions through retrofit of diesel vehicles
- Maintains organic community gardens
- Public golf courses are Audubon certified
- Applies Florida Friendly landscaping principles at its facilities
- Minimizes heat effect / stormwater runoff of trees, highly reflective materials, or surfaces
- Implemented recycling stations for plastic, glass, and aluminum containers at all public areas
- Implemented energy efficient lighting & controls for outdoor courts, parks, and playfield
- Developed a system of sustainable community indicators related to local government planning
- Assists other departments with the tracking of indicators related to their function
- Implemented FDOT "12 Steps Towards Walkable Communities" into planning process
- Enacted Healthy Street design as official local government policy
- Encourages mixed-use zoning / development
- Implemented advanced storm water controls and waterfront considerations
- Analyzed transportation routes to determine connectivity to bicycle & pedestrian networks
- Utilizes integrated pest management
- Utilizes LED traffic lights
- Uses solar or other energy efficient streetlights and/or crosswalk lights
- Separates construction & demolition materials for recycling at landfills

- Offers curbside recycling for homes and businesses
- Implemented idle time reduction retrofits to police cruisers

Since the FGBC Green Local Government Certification program was launched, 73 Florida governments have registered to participate in the certification process, with 49 achieving certification to date. 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.

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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