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For Immediate Release

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Wellington 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 Wellington a certified Florida Green Local Government after it successfully met the sustainability standards established in the FGBC Green Local Government Certification program. Wellington achieved 42 percent of its 303 applicable points, earning them a gold-level designation.

Suzanne Cook, FGBC Executive Director, said the designation demonstrates exemplary leadership by Mayor Darrell Bowen 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, Wellington staff, led by Bill Nemser, principal planner, 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 of Wellington,” 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 Wellington, Cook listed the significant accomplishments that were achieved:

- Developed a mission statement to include environmental commitment and incorporated it into the city’s comprehensive plan
- Maintain an office, person or group to coordinate current and future green activities
- Monitor and track city’s energy use, and develop an energy reduction plan
- Become an Energy Star ally
- Offer energy audits to the public
- Develop a water reduction plan
- Create a reclaimed water infrastructure
- Adopt a green standard as the official minimum criteria for new government buildings
- Construct or renovate government buildings to green certification standards
- Adopt FGBC or LEED green standards as the official green standards for the city
- Offer incentives for the location of green businesses within the city
- Offer incentives for green redevelopment
- Offer incentives for construction of green and location-efficient (access to public services) affordable housing
- Develop an historic preservation ordinance
- Offer green building education and materials to the public

- Offer incentives for FGBC or LEED certified commercial and institutional building
- Require mitigation for consumption of natural habitat or resources
- Implemented an environmentally preferred purchasing program (EPP)
- Employ green cleaning and maintenance procedures
- Purchase of alternative fuel vehicles (AFV)
- Use alternative fuel vehicles or bicycle patrol for urban and neighborhood areas
- Police trained in crime prevention through environmental design
- Enact and enforce a tree preservation or land-clearing ordinance
- Enact green landscaping ordinance for city buildings and any new construction
- Enact a rain sensor ordinance applicable to all functioning automatic irrigation systems
- Apply Florida Friendly landscaping principles at public amenities
- Budget for public education related to the city's green commitment
- Offer free or discounted green products to the public
- Offer incentives to create organic farms or sustainable and water-efficient agriculture
- Offer education on organic farming, permaculture and sustainable agriculture
- Offer education of water conservation within the agricultural sector
- Provide incentives for alternative commuting for city employees
- Provide reusable mug or water bottles to city employees
- Include the city's environmental commitment in new employee orientation
- Conduct training on city's green programs
- Recycle end-of-life electronic equipment
- Operate a website dedicated to the city's green programs
- Operate an environmental learning center and develop environmental education content for the city's websites, TV programs, etc.
- Provide pertinent local GIS and other data on the city's website
- Provide air quality index and results of water quality testing on the city's website
- Minimize chlorine in city swimming pools
- Minimize heat island effect, highly reflective materials and surfaces, and stormwater runoff from trees
- Implement recycling stations for plastic, glass and aluminum containers at all public areas
- Implement energy efficient lighting and controls for outdoor courts, parks and playfields

- Maintain a bicycle/pedestrian coordinator on staff
- Develop urban area boundaries
- Encourage mixed-use zoning and development
- Make amends for vehicles to accommodate bicycle traffic
- Analyze transportation routes to determine connectivity to bicycle and pedestrian network
- Provide public transportation route searching and alternative commuting via the internet
- Utilize integrated pest management
- Use solar or other energy-efficient streetlights
- Perform street sweeping and routine maintenance for storm sewers
- Become a Tree City USA
- Develop a reward program for employee environmental innovation in public works
- Train and certify select staff as certified arborists
- Develop a community stormwater education campaign
- Involve students in green projects outside the school
- Become an EPA waste-wise partner
- Provide city-wide chemical and hazardous waste collection
- Offer recycled paint back to the community
- Teach Environmentally Preferred Purchasing and recycling to local businesses
- Conduct a customer waste survey
- Utilize informative billing and use recycled bill envelopes
- Utilize rate structures based on consumption
- Require metering of shallow aquifer removal and sub-metering of multi-family housing
- Distribute printed material or create website content detailing water and wastewater source
- Maintain an on-call water quality program

Since the FGBC Green Local Government Certification program was launched, 36 Florida municipalities have achieved certification, with 19 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 Wellington officials will be held on March 13, 2012 at 7 p.m. during the City Council meeting in the City Hall located at 12300 Forest Hill Boulevard in Wellington.

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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