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For Immediate Release

Contact: Suzanne B. Cook, CAE
PH: 850-894-3422
Email: cooks@nettally.com

Doral 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 Doral a certified Florida Green Local Government after it successfully met the sustainability standards established in the FGBC Green Local Government Certification program. Doral achieved 26 percent of the 312 applicable points, earning it a Bronze-level designation.

Suzanne Cook, FGBC Executive Director, said the designation demonstrates exemplary leadership by Mayor Juan Bermudez 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, Doral staff, led by Director of Planning and Zoning Nathan Kogon, 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 Doral,” 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 Doral, Cook listed just a few of the significant accomplishments that were achieved:

- Developed a system of sustainability indicators for local government planning
- Adopted a Green Master Plan and guiding principles
- Installed energy-efficient lighting, timers and controls at sports fields
- Utilized hybrid vehicles or operate on alternative fuels in over 12 percent of its fleet
- Encourages Environmental Preferable Purchasing (EPP Program)
- Committed to building green and leading by example
- Implemented green building incentives for homes, developments and commercial buildings
- Utilize bike patrols in neighborhoods, parks and downtown areas
- Police trained in crime prevention through environmental design
- Enacted a Florida Friendly landscaping ordinance for new construction
- Offers free or discounted green products to the public
- Provide sustainability education to the community and local government staff
- Adopted mixed-use zoning and development
- Zoning regulations aim to reduce or limit use of impervious area
- Operates a public reuse store
- Provides alternative commuting incentives to their employees
- Performed a carbon inventory and incorporated actions to become a carbon-neutral city government

Since the FGBC Green Local Government Certification program was launched, 41 Florida municipalities have achieved certification, with 17 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 Doral officials will be held on Wednesday, September 19, 2012 at 6 p.m. during the City of Doral Council Zoning meeting at 8401 NW 53 Terrace, Doral, Fla.

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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