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Winter Park 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 Winter Park a certified Florida Green Local Government after it successfully met the sustainability standards established in the FGBC Green Local Government Certification program. Winter Park achieved 42 percent of the 315 applicable points, earning them a gold-level designation.

Suzanne Cook, FGBC Executive Director, said the designation demonstrates exemplary leadership by Mayor Kenneth Bradley 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, Winter Park staff, led by Sustainability Coordinator Tim Maslow, 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 Winter Park,” 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 Winter Park, Cook listed just a few of the significant accomplishments that were achieved:

- Incorporate a sustainability plan into the City’s comprehensive plan
- Develop a local government energy reduction plan and method to monitor energy use.
- Use LED traffic lights
- Offer energy audits
- Develop a water reduction plan and method to monitor water use
- Implement advanced stormwater controls and waterfront considerations
- Provide low-flow fixture rebates
- Create a reclaimed water infrastructure
- Develop a local government solid/hazardous waste reduction plan.
- Utilize integrated pest management
- Develop an Environmentally Preferred Purchasing program (EPP) for the local government and teach EPP / recycling to local businesses
- Provide incentives for local businesses that utilize EPP or other solid waste reduction strategies
- Incorporate alternative fuel vehicles into local government fleet and maintain green fleets
- Employ green cleaning and maintenance procedures
- Maintain an office, person, or group to coordinate current and future green activities

- Adopt a green standard as official minimum criteria for new government buildings
- Enact green landscaping ordinance for local government buildings
- Become a Tree City USA
- Become a partner in the EPA waste wise program
- Provide city-wide chemical/hazardous waste collection
- Provide curbside recycling for homes and businesses
- Offer free or discounted green products to the public
- Offer incentives to create organic farms, or sustainable/water efficient agriculture
- Offer green building or green local government education to the community
- Conduct a green building awards program
- Develop an historic preservation ordinance and funding mechanism
- Encourage mixed-use zoning / development
- Maintain active Florida Yards & Neighborhood program or other outreach program
- Apply Florida-Friendly landscaping principles at public amenities
- Offer promotion and education of water conservation within the agricultural sector
- Offer education on organic farming, permaculture and sustainable agriculture
- Require mitigation for consumption of natural habitat or resources
- Enact a rain sensor ordinance applicable to all functioning automatic irrigation systems
- Utilize non-lead bullets or trap and collect fragments on firing ranges
- Minimize photo-processing waste
- Conserve water in Fire department training operations
- Utilize recycled billing envelopes and enable online bill payments
- Enable customers to track and analyze their energy usage via the internet
- Construct/renovate green buildings and offer incentives for location efficient affordable housing
- Offer alternative commuting incentives for local government employees
- Include the city's commitment to the environment in new employee orientation
- Operate local government computer and equipment reuse center and recycle end-of-life electronic equipment
- Enact local government policy so all computer/ancillary equipment is off when not in use
- Enact policy so all computer electronic equipment purchased has conservation features
- Operate website dedicated to the city's green program

- Enact a manatee protection plan
- Provide air quality index and water quality testing results on website
- Operate an environmental demonstration / learning center
- Maintain organic community gardens
- Organize green building seminars for staff and elected officials
- Analyze transportation routes to determine connectivity to bicycle & pedestrian network
- Provide public transportation route searching and alternative commuting on the internet
- Involve students in green projects outside the school
- Operate public reuse store / swap shop

Since the FGBC Green Local Government Certification program was launched, 34 Florida municipalities 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 Winter Park officials will be held on September 26, 2011 at 3:30 p.m. during the City Commission meeting in City Hall, 401 S Park Ave, Winter Park.

The Florida Green Building Coalition is an independent non-profit organization that was established in 2000 to promote green building in Florida. With over 3,800 homes and numerous other project types certified, FGBC is the leading certifier of green projects 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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