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BROWARD COMPLETE STREETS GUIDELINES PAVE WAY FOR SAFER, HEALTHIER STREETS
CDC Grant mobilizes Broward MPO to Create Tools for walkable, bikable communities

Taking a big step toward safer, healthier streets, the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (Broward MPO) unanimously endorsed the Broward Complete Streets Guidelines today.

The Broward MPO is the first regional agency in Florida and the nation to use *The Model Design Manual for Living Streets for Los Angeles County* for the development of customized Complete Streets Guidelines. These Guidelines can now be used to empower local governments to design, construct and operate streets to meet the demands of *all* transportation modes and *all* users, of all abilities.

Leveraging a recently awarded Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) grant, the Transforming Our Community's Health (TOUCH) Initiative, the Broward Regional Health Planning Council (BRHPC) partnered with the Broward MPO and the Smart Growth Partnership, to create healthy and safe places in Broward County that support active lifestyles. As the regional transportation planning agency for Broward County, the Broward MPO developed Complete Streets Guidelines that can be used by local jurisdictions.

"By providing the framework for all transportation modes, this grant helped us lay a foundation for healthy, livable communities," Gregory Stuart, Broward MPO Executive Director said. "It is all about connecting communities through transportation choices."

Through surveys, focus groups, public workshops and the guidance of a 30+ member Technical Advisory Committee, the Broward MPO transformed a national Complete Streets template into a customized, comprehensive resource for Broward area planners, engineers and public officials. The guidelines include recommended traffic calming measures; pedestrian, bicycle and public transportation improvements; environmental enhancements; roadway design; and public outreach tools to help communities shift from an autocentric focus to one that includes all modes.

According to recent research, Broward has a pent up demand for infrastructure that provides a safe and comfortable environment for biking, walking and taking public transportation. In an Initiative sponsored survey, approximately 50 percent of respondents indicated they would drive less if they felt safe getting out of the car.

"Broward residents said in the community survey, they would walk more if the appropriate infrastructure is in place; now local governments have the tools to create a more balanced transportation infrastructure," Mike De Lucca, BRHPC President and CEO, said. "Given the soaring rates of childhood obesity and diseases related to a sedentary lifestyle, even a small increase in physical activity among Broward residents can significantly improve health outcomes."

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Now the Guidelines have been endorsed, the next step will be implementing them into each local jurisdiction's transportation policies and practices. Two municipalities have already taken steps to begin adopting the Guidelines into their design standards.

"These Guidelines mean nothing if they aren't incorporated into local government policy," Stuart said. "We are committed to providing the necessary support to advance their implementation."

For more information about the Guidelines and the team partners, please visit: www.browardcompletestreets.org

About TOUCH

The Transforming Our Community's Health (TOUCH) initiative is a true collaborative effort among more than 30 community organizations and coalitions that will support efforts to reduce health disparities and improve the health and well-being of the residents, commuters, and workers of Broward County. For more information about TOUCH, please contact TOUCH Program Director Teina Phillips tphillips@brhpc.org or at (954) 561-9681.

About the Broward MPO

The Broward MPO is a transportation policy-making board responsible for transportation planning and funding allocation in Broward County. The Broward MPO works with the public, planning organizations, government agencies, elected officials, and community groups to develop transportation plans.

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