



www.reconnectinglee.org

June 21, 2009

Letter to the Editor:

Picture the bicyclist that was just killed on Pine Island Road and it's easy to see why changing our design for future road-building is vital. But that's not the only reason. Lee County cannot afford to simply keep building bigger roads to accommodate ever increasing suburbanization.

We commend the News-Press for its recent editorial calling for a broader range of transportation options in Lee County. We support you in the important role the News-Press plays in helping to shape public opinion on the critical issue of how to best meet our growing population's transportation needs in the future. This is particularly relevant now, when stimulus funds could help pay for real projects.

Our informal association, "Reconnecting Lee County", represents public and private sector individuals with a shared vision to rethink and perhaps reinvent how Lee County grows in the future—our focus is transportation and transit-oriented development (TOD). We think the best solutions will include mixed use walkable neighborhoods served by people- and bike-friendly road systems known as "complete streets", ideally located within a short distance of mass transit. We applaud the Lee County Commission for its Resolution supporting complete streets.

TOD can connect our communities in a way that reduces automobile dependence and creates spaces that are truly a pleasure for people of all ages. We believe that the News-Press and Lee County leaders are on the right path toward people- and transit-oriented road and development design. Your editorial in support of complete streets is an important step in the journey to a better Lee County. Please visit our website at www.reconnectinglee.org.

MerriBeth Farnham
On behalf of Reconnecting Lee County