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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Port St. Lucie marks 10 years of sidewalk enhancements

PORT ST. LUCIE, FL (Aug. 12, 2016) – This year marks the 10th anniversary of Port St. Lucie’s sidewalk priority plan, which has resulted in more than 25 miles of sidewalks constructed in the City so far, and more than \$8.8 million invested in sidewalks to enhance safety for residents and visitors in the past decade.

As students in Port St. Lucie’s public schools head back to bus stops and classrooms on Monday, City leaders are encouraging students and parents to use these available sidewalks, and for drivers to be aware of all pedestrians.

“Please be aware that children could be out, so please slow down and give them plenty of room,” said Port St. Lucie Vice Mayor Linda Bartz. “We need to watch out for all children whether they are sitting at a bus stop or walking to school.”

The City Council in 2006 identified the need to begin a sidewalk program to provide safer refuges for pedestrians and children. The plan focuses on three areas: Roads surrounding schools, major roadways, and roads connecting to already existing sidewalks. So far, the plan has resulted in 25.11 miles, or 132,586 linear feet, of sidewalks in the city.

The actual amount of sidewalks constructed in Port St. Lucie since 2006 is even higher because those statistics only account for sidewalks prioritized in the sidewalk plan. Others have been installed as part of road construction projects.

“The City’s Public Works Department, Engineering Department, with City Council support, have also undertaken a number of roadway projects where the City Council directed us to install sidewalks as part of those programs,” said Public Works Director James Angstadt. “An example will be the Crosstown

Parkway. There's almost 12 miles of sidewalks on that roadway already existing and when the new bridge comes in we'll have more."

The City has actively pursued grants during the past decade to pay for sidewalk projects, even during the economic downturn.

"We chased every grant we could. In the early years, when the economy was faltering and many communities weren't chasing sidewalk grants, we were," Angstadt said. "We jumped on it."

Besides sidewalks, Public Works employees have been out inspecting crossings and road striping to make sure all areas in school zones are ready for a new school year. There are 30 flashing signals in the City to help make drivers aware of school crossings.

Port St. Lucie drivers have been recognized for their safe driving. In June, Allstate named Port St. Lucie as the 7th safest place among U.S.'s large cities for drivers. Allstate America's Best Drivers Report is an annual ranking that identifies which of the 200 largest U.S. cities that have the safest drivers.

To learn more about current sidewalk projects in the City, please see:

http://www.cityofpsl.com/public-works/sidewalks_pedestrian_access.html

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The City of Port St. Lucie is proud to be a hometown where people live, learn, work and play, and celebrate all of life's opportunities. With over 179,000 residents, Port St. Lucie is Florida's eighth largest city by population (South Florida's 3rd largest city). The City occupies an area of 120 square miles in St. Lucie County on Florida's east coast, about 50 miles north of West Palm Beach, half way between Miami and Orlando. The City provides most traditional municipal services including law enforcement, water and sewer, and public works. For more information, please visit: www.cityofpsl.com

