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For Immediate Release
Monday, February 3, 2020

Orange City Named Healthy Weight Community Champion

ORANGE CITY – Orange City is one of the three Volusia County municipalities that have been named Healthy Weight Community Champions by the Florida Department of Health (DOH). Orange City, Deltona, and Port Orange are among 33 communities statewide that earned the recent designation.

“These cities have worked to improve the health of their community in different ways,” said DOH-Volusia administrator Patricia Boswell. “Ranging from comprehensive planning and code requirements to trail and walkability efforts, these efforts are focused on creating an environment that supports healthy communities.”

A pilot city for the Walkability Action Institute, Orange City is working on interdisciplinary teams to pursue policy, systems, and environmental supports for walking and walkability. By creating a safe environment to practice physical activity and by increasing access to healthier foods, the city also is promoting healthy behaviors. According to its application, the city’s comprehensive plan includes provisions that encourage a diverse mix of transportation modes by requiring a hierarchy of interconnected streets for different traffic characteristics, internal mobility corridors designed as complete streets, and transit-ready development. The plan also requires that development along major transit corridors provide external transit shelters and sidewalks that link to internal pedestrian and bicycle paths within the development. Six of the city’s seven parks are in low-income areas. Three parks have playgrounds. The city also allows community gardens as a responsible and customary accessory use in most cases.

Three East Volusia cities named in 2018 continue to be recognized as Healthy Weight Community Champions. New Smyrna Beach, Ormond Beach and Ponce Inlet will retain the designation through 2020.

In the summer of 2019, local governments were encouraged to submit best practices and policies they have implemented in their jurisdictions related to health and wellness, Boswell added. The work highlighted on the applications demonstrates local government commitment to making Florida the healthiest state in the nation.

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