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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FORT PIERCE MAYOR BOB BENTON PRESENTS “STATE OF THE CITY” ADDRESS AT OCTOBER EDC MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON

Port St. Lucie, FL – The City of Fort Pierce was the center of attention at the Economic Development Council’s monthly membership luncheon this past Tuesday, October 6, 2009. Mayor Bob Benton was the guest of honor and presented a “State of the City” address to the audience of 124.

Accompanied by City Manager, David Recor, Mayor Benton presented an optimistic outlook on the City of Fort Pierce and lauded a number of progressive development efforts currently underway. Among the projects the city is most excited about, is the completion of their downtown marina and waterfront redevelopment. After the hurricanes of 2004, the city took an innovative approach to protecting the marina from storm surges and has designed a system of spoil islands to protect the waterfront. Mayor Benton reported that this first-of-its-kind pilot project was recently praised and approved by the Governor and the Cabinet, and now only awaits final approval from the Army Corps of Engineers.

In addition to the waterfront project, Benton updated the crowd on the status of the new Federal Courthouse being built on the southwest corner of U.S. 1 and Orange Avenue in downtown Fort Pierce and the redevelopment initiative taking place on what he referred to as the “gateway” to Avenue D. The Mayor also praised the financial status of the city by announcing it had maintained its current millage rates and would not be raising taxes on Fort Pierce residents.

Keiser University was also invited to speak as the sponsor of the EDC’s October luncheon. On behalf of the institution, Dr. Thomas Creola announced the expansion of the Port St. Lucie campus into St. Lucie West and a probable partnership with the PGA Village in growing their Golf Management degree program.

The principals behind Project Vision, a research and manufacturing optics firm which has committed 200 jobs to St. Lucie County and has plans to locate in Fort Pierce, were also scheduled to speak, but had to postpone their formal introduction. They have rescheduled their announcement until the November meeting.

The next EDC membership luncheon is scheduled for November 3, 2009 at 12:00pm on the IRSC/FAU Joint Use Campus in the Schrieber Center. The feature speaker will be Mayor Patricia Christensen, who has agreed to give a “State of the City” presentation for Port St. Lucie and make some formal introductions in regards to the city’s work on Project Ham, a digital production studio project with 500 potential jobs for the area. For information on membership or the monthly member luncheons, please contact the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County at 772-879-4144 or visit www.yourEDC.com.

About the Economic Development Council:

The mission of the EDC is to encourage a competitive environment that nurtures clusters of industries employing state of the art technologies, a skilled workforce, and that stimulates economic growth through expansion of the private sector. *For more information about the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County, visit www.yourEDC.com or call (772) 879-4144.*

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