



## PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release  
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941/306-0105**

**Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida  
Undertaking LEED Certification for Lockwood Ridge Road Banking Location  
Independent Community Bank to Construct First LEED Certified Banking Facility  
in Sarasota and Manatee Counties**

November 14, 2008 – (Sarasota, Florida) – Shaun P. Merriman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida, announced today Gateway Bank has undertaken an ambitious program to obtain LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for the proposed Gateway Bank at the intersection of Lockwood Ridge Road and University Parkway. The Lockwood Ridge Road location is scheduled to open in the first quarter of 2009.

In making the announcement, Merriman commented, “We believe in environmental awareness and are making a commitment to being a leader in the industry as it relates to the green initiative.” Merriman continued, “While we understand there are limitations to what can be done with existing banking structures, wherever possible, we will take necessary steps to have environmentally friendly facilities.”

A former Regions Bank location, the Lockwood Ridge Road facility presented many challenges to the planning and building team. The Sarasota architectural firm, Carlson Studio Architecture designed the renovation of the facility and Willis A. Smith Construction will handle the actual construction. Both Carlson Studio Architecture and Willis A. Smith Construction are recognized leaders in the green building initiative on the west coast of Florida.

Obtaining LEED certification is a challenging task according to Michael Carlson of Carlson Studio Architecture. “LEED certification is overseen by the United States Green

Building Council (USGBC) and requires third party verification and inspection of all aspects of design and construction.” Carlson continued, “In all of Sarasota County, less than ten commercial facilities have obtained this certification and at last count, only 35 buildings in the state have received this certification.”

When complete, the Lockwood Ridge Banking Center will be equipped with advanced energy and water conservation features. The facility will also achieve compliance with indoor environmental quality standards which greatly limits the chemical content of all materials used inside the building. Interior finish materials use recycled content and the use of environmentally friendly insulation materials reduce energy consumption.

Concurrent with the announcement of this effort to obtain LEED certification, Merriman also announced the commitment of the company to obtain compliance with the Sarasota County Green Business Partnership standards. “We are currently investigating the steps we need to take to be in a part of the Green Business Partnership, reinforcing our commitment to the highest environmental standards.”

***About Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida:*** Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida is an independent community bank serving business and consumer banking customers in Sarasota and Manatee counties.

Gateway Bank operates a full service banking location in the Center Pointe Plaza at 2033 Main Street in downtown Sarasota, one block east of South Washington Boulevard. A second Gateway Bank location is the newly opened Manatee Avenue Banking Center located on the northwest corner of 21<sup>st</sup> Street West and Manatee Avenue West. The bank will open a third location at 6204 North Lockwood Ridge Road and University Parkway in the first quarter of 2009.

The shareholders and directors of Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida are primarily residents of Sarasota and Manatee counties. The Board of Directors includes: Charles J. Bartlett – Icard, Merrill, Cullis, Timm, Furen and Ginsburg, PA; Dr. Gary K. Bockhold – Center for Sight; Dr. P.T. “Bud” Fleuchaus – Gateway Financial Holdings of Florida, Inc.; David J. Grain – Grain Capital, LLC; David K. Maholias – Gateway Financial Holdings of Florida, Inc.; Shaun P. Merriman – Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida; Gavin W. Meshad – JWM Management, Inc.; Katherine K. Moulton – The Colony Beach & Tennis Resort; Wayne M. Ruben – Ruben-Holland Development, LLC; David E. Sessions, Willis A. Smith Construction Inc.; and Jan E. Smith – Jan Smith and Company.

Further information regarding Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida may be obtained by contacting Shaun P. Merriman, President and CEO at 941-306-0105.

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