

Seven50 Road Show Remarks October 11, 2012, Marathon (HC)

- Welcome
- Acknowledge elected officials (Who's here?)
- What is Seven50?
 - It is a plan we are all developing together, a vision for the next 50 years of the future for the seven counties including Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River counties.
 - Developed by the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership, a coalition of the South Florida Regional Planning Council and Treasure Coast Planning councils, funded by a Sustainable Communities grant provided by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.
 - Together, this region represents the fifth-largest metropolitan area in the country. These seven counties, though diverse, have much in common, including a shared history, environment and watershed, economic interdependence, transportation system, and recreational, social and cultural activities. Our region is classified as "Southeast Florida" by Enterprise Florida, and defined as the "Southeast Region" in the Strategic Intermodal Plan of the Florida Department of Transportation.
- This is the first stop in the Seven50 Road Show, the kick-off to a series of workgroup meetings with community leaders, activists and interested citizens from here up to Indian River. So we can set the tone for this entire undertaking.

- Why are you here?
 - Some of you may have been invited because you've been identified as a community leader, either by title or by action
 - Regardless, your attendance here demonstrates that you have a deep interest in our Keys community
 - We are here to help shape a vision for all of Southeast Florida, from Sebastian to Key West.
- May seem like this is an exercise that will not impact us. We in the Keys often feel
 - disconnected from the mainland,
 - that our lifestyle is very different,
 - that when you're off the rock you're in another country.
- But we ARE connected. What happens in the other six counties directly impacts us now and in the future.
 - We have a common watershed, a common source of fresh water.
 - We share an ocean.
 - We share transportation systems, including highways and airport hubs.
 - We have similar rich, diverse cultures – we are one of the most ethnically diverse regions of America.
 - We share recreational, social and cultural activities.
 - How many of us go to the mainland for concerts or sporting events,
 - and how many folks from the mainland visit us for fishing, diving, boating and, of course, FantasyFest?

- We are economically interdependent.
 - Our tourism economy thrives year-round at least in part because of the South Floridians who can drive here.
 - Many of our residents are employed on the mainland,
 - and many mainland residents are employed by businesses here, especially in the Upper Keys.
- Now, we in the Keys, being independent of spirit, may bristle at the thought of some overarching vision that can encompass areas as seemingly different as Vero Beach, Stuart, Boca Raton, Overland, Hialeah, South Beach and Marathon. I think part of our work today is to understand how we can together craft a future that helps us preserve our Keys character, culture, environment and way of life while creating prosperity and a sustainable vision for tomorrow.
- Let me say a word about that word “sustainable.” Mr. Ed Swift, a member of the executive committee for Seven50, asked us to be specific about a definition, so I’d like to share how we’ve defined it.
 - The concept of sustainability holds that the demands of today must not supersede the needs of the future. Sustainability is often narrowly associated with natural systems but in reality applies to the entire living environment. This environment includes social and economic systems that are also demanding on finite resources. Sustainable development of the Region requires balance between the resource requirements of the environment, the economy, and society.
- So as we work through today, here are some questions to consider about how the future of these seven counties may impact us here.

- How does increased development on the mainland impact
 - Our economy?
 - Hurricane evacuation?
 - Our ability to get to a major airport?
- What kinds of industries in the region could help create jobs and economic diversity in our local economy?
- How do we ensure that changes elsewhere in our region don't contribute to the degradation of our natural environment?
- What unique qualities can we provide to the educational landscape of our region?
- How can we improve transportation networks, especially when we have one road in and one road out?
- How might changes in Latin America – say, increased prosperity of Brazil or the opening of Cuba – impact our region and our county?
- What adaptations may we need to consider in the future as our freshwater sources become increasingly stressed?
- This is no small task. It is daunting, but it is also extremely exciting to be planning for our future. Our local governments, including the County Commission, may make decisions in the future based on the outcome of this process. Thank you all so much for being part of it. I encourage you to follow the progress of Seven50 on the website, seven50.org, and if you can make it, attend one of these workshops in another County, or come to our next summit in January. Again, thank you for being here, and let's get to work.