

GOOD MORNING EVERYONE!

THANK YOU DIRECTOR LIU FOR THAT INTRODUCTION AND FOR THE LEADERSHIP YOU HAVE PROVIDED SINCE JOINING THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FAMILY.

I WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE AND THANK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AUDREY EDMONSON WHOSE DISTRICT WE ARE IN, AND DANIELLA LEVINE-CAVA, AS WELL AS CITY OF MIAMI COMMISSIONER WILLY GORT.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PRESIDENT OF THE LIBERTY SQUARE RESIDENT COUNCIL, MS. SARA SMITH.

THANK YOU ALL FOR JOINING US TODAY FOR WHAT I BELIEVE WILL BE A HISTORIC DAY!

WE HAVE GATHERED HERE TO MAKE ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ANNOUNCEMENTS IN THE HISTORY OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, AND ONE THAT WILL PROBABLY REPRESENT THE BIGGEST CHANGE TO THIS AREA IN NEARLY 80 YEARS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THIS IS HISTORY IN THE MAKING...

AS LIBERTY SQUARE TURNS 78 YEARS OLD THIS FRIDAY, WE ARE THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE THE

LONG-AWAITED REVITALIZATION OF THIS COMMUNITY.

WE ARE CALLING THIS UNDERTAKING "LIBERTY CITY RISING" IN PART BECAUSE IT REPRESENTS OUR HOPES FOR WHAT THIS COMMUNITY CAN BECOME.

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE NEW DEAL ERA, LIBERTY SQUARE WILL UNDERGO A MONUMENTAL REVITALIZATION AND REDEVELOPMENT PROCESS THAT WILL FOREVER TRANSFORM NOT ONLY LIBERTY SQUARE BUT ALSO LIBERTY CITY AS WHOLE.

LIBERTY SQUARE WAS CONCEIVED AS A SOLUTION TO A HOUSING CRISIS THAT HIT THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY PARTICULARLY HARD DUE TO THE REGRETTABLE PERIOD OF SEGREGATION IN OUR COUNTRY.

IT HAS BEEN THE SITE OF MANY SUCCESS STORIES AS DR. DOROTHY BENDROSS-MENDINGALL, YOUR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, CAN ATTEST.

BUT MORE RECENTLY IT HAS REGRETTABLY BEEN AN AREA FOR CRIMINAL ACTIVITY.

HOWEVER, DESPITE THESE CHALLENGES, IT IS WITHIN OUR GRASP TO CHANGE THAT...

IF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS APPROVES MY PROPOSAL TO INVEST \$74 MILLION IN COUNTY FUNDS - \$32 MILLION OF WHICH WOULD COME FROM THE VOTER-APPROVED GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND - TO REBUILD THIS AREA, WE'LL BE WELL ON OUR WAY TOWARD ACCOMPLISHING THREE THINGS:

FIRST, WE'LL BE IMPROVING THE STANDARD OF LIVING FOR EVERYONE RESIDING IN THIS COMMUNITY.

SECOND, WE'LL BE PROVIDING JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE VERY PEOPLE THAT HAVE MADE THEIR LIVES HERE,

AND THIRD, WE'LL HAVE TAKEN A BIG STEP TO CURBING THE CRIMINAL ACTIVITY THAT HAS PLAGUED LIBERTY CITY BECAUSE I BELIEVE CRIME CAN ONLY THRIVE WHERE THERE IS A LACK OF OPPORTUNITY.

IN ADDITION, "LIBERTY CITY RISING" HOPES TO ATTRACT SIGNIFICANT PRIVATE INVESTMENTS THAT WOULD LEVERAGE THE REVITALIZING OF LIBERTY SQUARE TO MORE THAN \$200 MILLION.

I WANT TO MAKE CLEAR TO THE RESIDENTS THAT I AM A DOER, NOT A TALKER. WE ARE MAKING A COMMITMENT TO YOU AND THE COMMUNITY.

LET'S TALK ABOUT THE HOMES:

OUR PLAN IS TO BUILD HIGH-QUALITY WORKFORCE HOMES FOR A MIX OF INCOMES.

THE NEW BUILDINGS WILL HAVE MULTIPLE AMENITIES INCLUDING A CHILD CARE CENTER, A COMMUNITY CENTER WITH A LIBRARY AND COMPUTER LAB, RECREATIONAL AREAS AND 24-HOUR VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS THROUGHOUT THE PREMISES.

ISN'T THIS THE TYPE OF COMMUNITY THAT WE ALL WANT TO SEE HERE?

NOW LET'S TURN TO JOBS:

"LIBERTY CITY RISING" WILL BRING NEARLY 2,300 JOBS AND 285 MILLION DOLLARS IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY TO THIS COMMUNITY.

THROUGH MY EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE INITIATIVE WE WILL BE OFFERING CONSTRUCTION TRAINING AND WORK READINESS COURSES AT NO COST TO THOSE RESIDENTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN WORKING IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY AND PARTICULARLY ON THIS PROJECT.

I'VE SAID BEFORE THAT THE BEST WAY OUT OF POVERTY IS THROUGH A GOOD JOB AND THESE JOBS SHOULD BE FOR OUR RESIDENTS.

THE WORKERS ON THIS AND OTHER SITES SHOULD BE REPRESENTATIVE OF OUR COMMUNITY WHICH HASN'T ALWAYS BEEN THE CASE -- AND THAT IS SOMETHING EMPLOY MIAMI-DADE AIMS TO CHANGE.

SO RESIDENTS OF LIBERTY SQUARE AND LIBERTY CITY, I URGE YOU TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY!

I WORK FOR ALL OF YOU AS DOES MY ADMINISTRATION. AND I AM COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT YOU -- OUR RESIDENTS -- HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES AS OTHERS.

IT DOES NOT SIT WELL WITH ME TO CELEBRATE SO MANY OTHER GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS ELSEWHERE IN OUR COUNTY WHILE THE PEOPLE OF THIS COMMUNITY STRUGGLE WITH CRIME AND HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATES.

AS THE MAYOR OF ALL MIAMI-DADE COUNTY I WANT TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANYONE WHO'S WILLING TO WORK HARD TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY CONCERNS.

WHILE I'M ENCOURAGED THAT THE COUNTYWIDE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS JUST 6.7 PERCENT, THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN THIS COMMUNITY EXTENDS ABOVE TWENTY PERCENT.

AND THAT IS JUST UNACCEPTABLE.

SO TO THOSE OF US IN COUNTY GOVERNMENT, MEMBERS OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS I SAY THIS -- LET'S WORK TO SOLVE OUR COMMUNITY'S CHALLENGES TOGETHER.

OPPORTUNITY LIVES HERE...

STARTING TODAY WE'RE GOING TO CHANGE THE NARRATIVE SURROUNDING LIBERTY SQUARE AND LIBERTY CITY.

IT IS OUR GOAL THAT ONCE THE WORK IS DONE, RESIDENTS WILL HEAR THE SOUND OF CONSTRUCTION AND LATER THE SOUNDS OF CHILDREN AT PLAY.

I WANT TO SEE LIBERTY CITY FLOURISH AS MUCH AS YOU DO! I KNOW YOU WANT TO SEE YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN HAVE A BETTER FUTURE...

SO TOGETHER WE ARE GOING TO BUILD ON THE SUCCESS OF ONE COMMUNITY WORKING TOGETHER TOWARDS THE SAME GOAL.

I AM HERE TO SHOW YOU MY COMMITMENT TO HELP REBUILD LIBERTY CITY...

MY PLAN IS TO TRANSFORM THIS 709-UNIT APARTMENT COMPLEX INTO A CATALYST FOR CHANGE.

WE LEARNED A LOT FROM OUR CHALLENGES DURING THE SCOTT-CARVER REVEDEVELOPMENT IN 2000 AND WE DON'T INTEND TO REPEAT THOSE MISTAKES...

WE ARE GOING TO APPROACH THIS REDEVELOPMENT IN DIFFERENT PHASES.

IN OTHER WORDS, BEFORE DEMOLITION OF THE FIRST PHASE, NEW UNITS WILL BE CONSTRUCTED ON VACANT LAND TO ACCOMMODATE THE FIRST GROUP OF RESIDENTS; AND THE SAME APPROACH WILL BE TAKEN FOR THE FOLLOWING FOUR PHASES. WE EXPECT "LIBERTY CITY RISING" TO BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF 2019.

BEFORE I CLOSE, I WANT TO SAY THAT YOUR VOICES HAVE BEEN HEARD.

FOR TOO LONG YOU HAVE BEEN SHOUTING FOR ATTENTION AND TOGETHER WE ARE GOING TO PLACE LIBERTY CITY ON THE MAP OF PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY.

--BECAUSE IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

IF WE WANT TO LIVE IN A WORLD CLASS COMMUNITY WE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER AS ONE COMMUNITY. AS YOUR MAYOR, I AM COMMITTED TO MAKING SURE THAT NO AREA OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS LEFT BEHIND. YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT WILL WORK WITH FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO TRANSFORM LIBERTY SQUARE INTO WHAT WE ALL KNOW IT COULD BE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME TODAY! GOD BLESS YOU ALL AND MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!