

COMMISSIONER BOVO, I APPRECIATE YOU ORGANIZING THIS MEETING TODAY. YOU HAVE TAKEN A VERY STRONG LEADERSHIP ROLE AS CHAIRMAN OF THE TRANSIT AND MOBILITY SERVICES COMMITTEE. PLEASE ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT MY ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE AS A PARTNER TO YOU IN YOUR EFFORTS ON THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.

IN ADDITION TO THE CHALLENGES WE HAVE ALREADY IDENTIFIED THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO CONGESTION ON OUR ROADWAYS -- POPULATION GROWTH; THE NEED TO UPGRADE, MODERNIZE, AND EXPAND OUR TRANSIT SYSTEM; AND CHANGING THE CAR-FIRST CULTURE -- MIAMI-DADE RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES ARE CALLING ON THEIR ELECTED OFFICIALS TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES OF OUR GROWING WORLD-CLASS COMMUNITY.

THERE IS NO SILVER BULLET THAT WILL SOLVE OUR TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES HERE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY. MY ADMINISTRATION HAS WORKED DILIGENTLY TO IDENTIFY WAYS TO REDUCE CONGESTION ON OUR ROADWAYS;

MAINTAIN, IMPROVE, AND EXPAND OUR TRANSIT AND MOBILITY OPTIONS; AND INCORPORATE FEDERAL AND STATE RESOURCES, AS WELL AS THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO ADDRESS CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS.

I CALL IT THE “LASAGNA METHOD” BECAUSE THERE ARE MULTIPLE LAYERS OF RESOURCES THAT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY CAN TAP INTO IN ORDER TO SOLVE CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS.

INCORPORATING COMMUTER RAIL SHOULD BE A BIG PART OF OUR WORK.

FOR EXAMPLE WE HAVE A ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND TRI-RAIL TO DOWNTOWN MIAMI THANKS TO THE SUPPORT OF ALL ABOARD FLORIDA. TRI-RAIL’S PRESENCE IN DOWNTOWN WILL EVENTUALLY OPEN UP THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR, WHERE APPROXIMATELY ONE MILLION RESIDENTS CURRENTLY LIVE.

THIS EXPANSION WILL IMMEDIATELY CONNECT DOWNTOWN MIAMI WITH MIDTOWN AND THE CITIES OF NORTH MIAMI, MIAMI GARDENS, AVENTURA, AND OTHERS. ALL OF THIS IS FOR A VERY REASONABLE \$69 MILLION.

IF THE COUNTY WERE TO BUILD THAT SAME TRI-RAIL EXTENSION, THE COST COULD BE FIVE OR SIX TIMES HIGHER.

AS YOU KNOW, THE COUNTY'S CONTRIBUTION WILL BE APPROXIMATELY \$8.3 MILLION FROM THE PEOPLE'S TRANSPORTATION PLAN.

IF APPROVED, THIS WILL BE THE FIRST STEP IN EXPANDING TRANSIT OPTIONS IN ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING AREAS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

IN FACT, THE POPULATION OF DOWNTOWN MIAMI HAS DOUBLED OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS AND CONTINUES TO GROW BY ATTRACTING NEW RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.

MY VISION HOWEVER, IS TO ALSO EXPAND COMMUTER RAIL -- WHETHER IT'D BE METRORAIL, TRI-RAIL OR ANOTHER SERVICE - TO THE DENSELY POPULATED WESTERN SUBURBS AND UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

MANY OF OUR RESIDENTS SIT HOURS IN TRAFFIC ON A DAILY BASIS WHILE COMMUTING BETWEEN THEIR HOMES, THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOLS AND THEIR PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT -- THAT IS

PRECIOUS TIME THAT AS YOU CAN RELATE COMMISSIONER BOVO AS THE FATHER OF FIVE, THAT COULD BE TIME BETTER SPENT WITH THEIR FAMILIES.

IF WE TAKE A TRULY GLOBAL VIEW AND MAKE A COMMITMENT TO WORK TOGETHER ACROSS THE COUNTY WITH PARTNERS IN THE STATE GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR, WE CAN ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES.

BUT WE MUST TAKE A COUNTYWIDE VIEW. AS WE MOVE FORWARD WITH OUR WORK, WE CANNOT AND SHOULD NOT LIMIT OURSELVES IN ADDRESSING NEEDS IN SOME AREAS WITHOUT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE EFFECTS OUR WORK WILL HAVE IN SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS.

IN OTHER WORDS, WE MUST BE SENSITIVE TO THE NEEDS OF ALL OUR 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS AND THE MILLIONS MORE WHO VISITED OUR COUNTY EACH YEAR.

14.6 MILLION VISITORS CAME THROUGH MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IN 2014 ACCORDING TO THE GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION AND VISITORS

BUREAU, WHICH OF COURSE ADDS MORE TRAFFIC AND STRAINS OUR INFRASTRUCTURE.

TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS WE MUST BE CREATIVE.

WE MUST BE BOLD.

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE MUST ALL WORK TOGETHER.

AGAIN, I CONGRATULATE YOU COMMISSIONER BOVO FOR LEADING ON THESE VERY IMPORTANT ISSUES AND LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING TOGETHER OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS WHILE YOU SERVE AS CHAIRMAN OF THIS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT COMMITTEE. THANK YOU ALL!

