

City of Miami, Florida

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2009 Keystone Award **American Architectural Foundation** *20th Annual Accent on Architecture Awards Ceremony*

Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

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It is truly a personal honor for me to receive the 2009 Keystone Award.

I accept this recognition on behalf of my City Commission, City employees and the people of Miami.

I am humbled by the fact that I follow in the footsteps of two of the greatest mayors in American history, Richard M. Daley and Joe Riley.

They have been my friends, my mentors and my inspiration.

As mayors, we face significant challenges daily...eradicating poverty, ensuring the safety of our residents, providing a quality education for our children, creating opportunity for all.

We deal with the suffering of people losing their jobs, their homes, their businesses.

Our role to make cities sustainable, to make them work, to be the architects of their future, is more important today than perhaps at any other time in history.

Every generation faces a great collective challenge – a challenge that defines that generation by its response.

For our parents and our grandparents, the ones we now call the greatest generation, the challenge was a battle between opposing ideas...

They faced two world wars and a cold war – because of their response, democracy survives, continuing to represent hope and freedom.

Our generation also faces a great challenge—but is a challenge of a different sort.

Ours is not a battle between nations—a battle to preserve the fundamentals of democracy.

Ours is a battle to sustain life itself

To help sustain our planet, help sustain our cities, help sustain ourselves.

During the last few decades, the world has changed at a pace never before imagined, a world very different from the one our parents expected for us.

And yet, this much we know.....that our children and grandchildren will live in a world of exponential change, a world few of us can conceive today, and much less understand.

For the first time in history, over half the world's population live in cities and metro areas. In the US, it is 85%. And this trend will continue.

Metro areas drive the world's economies. In the US, they are responsible for over 90% of all jobs, income, and our Gross Domestic Product. And this trend will continue.

Traditionally, cities in America were developed as high density, compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods – think of Washington DC, Chicago, Boston, and New York – where neighborhoods connect to form great cities.

But all that changed - we abandoned our cities for the failed promise of the suburbs.....we paved our land.... Destroyed our natural areas.....wasted our water resources.....spent billions to connect distant neighborhoods..... Strained municipal budgets.....and we glorified the automobile.

And you know the result - longer commutes, traffic congestion, more asphalt, pollution, and isolation — disconnected neighborhoods diminishing human contact, separating us from our neighbors, and increasing human impact on climate change.

This is why the single most critical response to help save our planet is to embrace smart growth - to design cities that make sense.

We must live up to the legacy of the greatest generation... by letting our legacy be “the greenest generation.”

This distinction will not be achieved without proper and sustainable planning..... Because if you fail to plan, plan to fail.

Miami 21 is Miami's response.

It is more than a master plan. It is a blueprint for a sustainable Miami

It incorporates six elements; a new Form Based Code; Economic Development; Transportation and Transit; Parks and the Public Realm; Arts and Culture and Historic Preservation.

Miami is a city graced with unrivaled natural beauty

It should also be graced with great civic and green spaces..... With public parks and promenades within a half mile of every resident.

Where we will not need a car, where we can walk, use a bike safely, or ride a streetcar.

Where we preserve our historic buildings so we can appreciate our past.

Where we honor the arts.

And where economic opportunity and the American Dream continue to be available for those willing to work for them.

In 1906, David Burnham produced a plan for Chicago-

Speaking of his plan, he inspired us with these words---

Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized.

Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing.

In Miami, we are not afraid to dream big dreams; to aim high in work and in hope.

To take a step back for the sake of our future-

To control our destiny, and in so doing set a course to guarantee our sustainability.

We welcome our obligation to honor our debt to the past, and fulfill our duty to the future.

It is a moral obligation that rings with a sense of urgency, that we may leave our children a city, greater, better, more beautiful and more sustainable than was left to us.

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