

Regions

*Talk before the San Bernardino Annual City/County Conference
March 27, 2014*

--Thank you Janice for the invitation to speak.

--Who am I...past elected official...long time professor at UCR, 1965....

--Kudos to elected officials...dedication...want to do good...want to make a difference.

--Kudos to Janice Rutherford, a transformational Supervisor. Known Janice since she was a student at UCR...A+ in a class on political campaigning and wrote a superb senior thesis.

--Important that Inland Southern CA gets its act together....regions define the us and our future in the 21st century.

To begin however, let me emphasize five ideas about regions.

1) The 21st Century is the century of regions.

Lesson One from David Rusk in Cities without Suburbs, "The real city is the total metropolitan area--city and suburb."

2) Regions are the economic centerpieces of the global marketplace.

3) Regions are where most of us live, work, and play.

I remember coming back one evening from a meeting in Lake Elsinore. When I reached Corona, what I saw was a sea of lights, not separate jurisdictions. We live in the same place, share much the same future.

4) California is a state of regions. California Forward recently hosted a statewide economic conference in Los Angeles. California Forward divides the State into sixteen regions.

The important point--California regions are not the same! And as many emphasize, there are stark differences between Inland California and Coastal California--it is a tale of two Californias.

5) A sustainable future is closely tied to the three E's--economy, environment, and equity. Yet, this future cannot be separated from regional solutions to issues of air, water, land/open space, transportation, and energy. We need an integrated vision of sustainability!

Speaking as UCR's Director of the Center for Sustainable Suburban Development, or CSSD, we should reframe a 21st century vision for Inland Southern California. We need a vision that focuses on our assets. We need a vision that integrates economy, environment, and equity.

How do others see us? I was particularly angered by a recent LA Times story, "909: wrong number in beachside town. Street violence fuels a resurgence of Inland Empire stereotype." It is a stereotype widely shared by those who live in Orange County and in west Los Angeles.

Bruce Katz and Jennifer Bradley, authors of *The Metropolitan Revolution*, say this about a vision: "All transformative innovations begin with a vision, often one bold enough to redefine the identity and image of the metropolis....Visions clarify. Visions inspire. Visions catalyze. Visions matter. Successful visions are grounded in evidence, developed through the accumulation of relevant data and information, accompanied by smart analysis, experience, and intuition."

The most far reaching, environmentally friendly, and most successful regional planning effort in the U.S. is in the reddest state, Utah. The public-private partnership, Envision Utah, is a national model for creating the green city of the future, grappling with how to ease congestion, stopping sprawl, and cleaning the air.

The advantages, the assets of Inland Southern California are many. We are a complex place--rich and poor, rural and urban, diverse, growing, and large in population and geography. We are still defining our urban form. Riverside County will become in the next 40 years, the second most populous county in California, and San Bernardino County, the third or fourth.

Already the 12th largest metro in the country--larger than half the states in America, our advantages, our assets include mountains and deserts, 51 quite different cities, 16 colleges and universities--including UCR and CSUSB, over 40 hospitals--including several that are nationally renown, more golf courses than the counties of LA and Orange, national center for renewable energy--wind and especially solar, destinations points such as Palm Springs, Temecula, and downtown Riverside, Santa Ana River and its 70-mile bike path, extensive open space for recreation, high levels of community of faith, more casinos than any other area in the state, two cities with higher media family incomes than Beverly Hills, et cetera, et cetera.

The bankrupt City of San Bernardino is not the marker or the future vision for Inland Southern California.

I would offer, and underscore, my kudos to the San Bernardino County vision process, superbly led by the County CAO, Greg Devereaux.

One brag of a former Mayor--in 2012, the City of Riverside was selected as the Intelligent Community of the Year by the Intelligent Community Forum, a policy think tank located in New York City. We competed against the best in world, some 435 cities. We were selected by an international panel of judges coupled with an intensive on site visit. The final seven cities were Riverside and Austin, Texas, three from Canada, and one from Finland and one from Taiwan. Riverside was the first U.S. city ever selected as the Intelligent Community of the Year.

The art of muddling through should not define the regional policy agenda of Inland Southern CA.

Today, let me focus on an important, powerful book by Bruce Katz and Jennifer Bradley, *The Metropolitan Revolution: How Cities and Metros Are Fixing Our Broken Politics and Fragile Economy*. It should be read!

A quote from their book jacket: "A revolution is stirring in America. Across the nation cities and metropolitan areas, and the networks of pragmatic leaders who govern them, are taking on the big issues that Washington won't, or can't, solve. They are reshaping our economy and fixing our broken system."

The strength of the book is its many examples. However, today, let me focus instead on ten points I found especially important in *The Metropolitan Revolution*.

1) We are on our own.

We cannot look to Washington. It is a future of cuts, of reduced programs. There will not be much new funding for major infrastructure projects. CDBG is going away. Looking into the future, I do not see much change from the deadlock and disagreement in DC.

We cannot look to SAC. I have written but not submitted a column titled, "Where has Mayor Brown Gone." Let me share the draft column with you.

Point--we are on our own.

2) We must look to regions for creativity and innovation. It is in our hands.

In 33 years in office, I heard many talks. Perhaps the best was by James Rouse, a true American urban innovator, and visionary. His talk was to the National League of Cities' First Environmental Design Conference in October 1, 1981 in San Diego, CA. It was titled, "Design: The Key to Building Cities."

He makes any number of important points; they are as compelling in 2014 as they were in 1981. Here are two:

"For too long, we have accepted whatever our cities are as their destiny without raising up an awareness that we are responsible for them and that we have the opportunity within our hands to do enormously important things about them."

"Every city and town in this country has resources that are not being used to fulfill their potential."

Judith Rodin, President of Rockefeller Foundation, offers these comments in reviewing the *Metropolitan Revolution*: The leaders of the pragmatic caucus are "integrating their economic growth strategies with their unique assets and their competitive specializations, creating metro economies that export more and waste less, have sectors that serve as engines for both innovation and job creation, manufacture and ship more of what their workers invent and build, and create spaces where families can live, work, and prosper."

Point--our future is tied to this region, and that future is in our hands.

3) Cooperation is the new form of competition for successful regions.

Katz and Bradley say there five essential steps you must take to bring the metropolitan revolution to life in this region: "build your network, set your vision, find your game changer, bankroll the revolution, and sustain the gain."

They say that the “challenge for metropolitan areas is not whether they have leaders but whether those individuals work together in a concerted way to drive change....In the end, collaboration and network building are the most important foundations for transformative action....”

With example after example, Katz and Bradley illustrate many ways this kind of cooperation has produced real results.

Point--cooperation, not competition, should be the trademark of this region.

4) We should build on our regional assets and strengths.

Focusing on this region’s strengths and assets rather than on its deficits means that we have a better chance of successfully addressing problems.

Suzanne Morse in *Smart Communities* contends, “Leading with strengths has been the mantra of successful communities.”

She goes on to say, “The cataloguing of assets is a process that leads to a product: a renewed sense of community tangibles, a start toward new relationships, and an approach that begins where people live.”

Point--let’s lead with the assets and strengths of Inland Southern CA. Let’s build on our distinctive assets. Rutherford web site...Victoria Gardens, North Etiwanda Preserve, and Lewis Library and Technology Center.

5) We need to identify our region’s distinctive assets and strengths.

Here Katz and Bradley say leaders and stakeholders need to bring their collective experiences, intuition, and best of data to focus on analyzing and assessing the region’s strengths.

This obviously is another time, another conference, but it needs to be done. Let’s start talking about what is good about Inland Southern CA.

For example, this region’s strengths include higher education, health care, suburban lifestyle choices, solar energy, physical resources, destination places, new immigrants, good movements, open space, different kinds of cities--urban to rural, large and small, and you can add to the list.

The point--let’s frame a 21st century vision for Inland Southern CA in which we can take pride.

6) We must trade in the global marketplace.

Katz and Bradley argue that It is imperative for the US to trade and globally engage as never before.

Such an opportunity is before Inland Southern CA. We should design and execute our own trade and foreign policy. We need to dedicate resources to exporting, foreign direct investment, and global exchange.

Katz and Bradley call for a new global network of trading metros engaged in the seamless and integrated exchange of people, goods, services, energy, capital, ideas, and culture.

The point--our success depends on taking trading seriously as a region.

7) We must take lead in adapting technological innovation.

Katz and Bradley conclude that the technological innovation will fuel both the creation and stewardship of leadership networks.

We live in a world of apps...

Review Gavin Newsom's, *Citizenville* for best practices....

The point--our region should be at the front, not the rear of technological innovation.

8) We must see metros as the new sovereigns.

Katz and Bradley devote a chapter to this argument. They say that metros must figure out how to work with state and federal governments. But they should do so from a position of strength. They should be actors, not subjects. They say we must rethink federalism--their call is for a collaborative federalism.

I like this quote: "In some cases, cities and metros lead and states and the federal government follow. In other cases, it is the reverse. But in either case, mutual respect and comity hold."

What do we need by way of rules and support?

The point--our region should take a leadership approach in terms of our relationship with DC and SAC.

9) We must look to, and support, a local leadership.

Katz and Bradley emphasize a new kind of metropolitan leadership. It is what they call the pragmatic caucus. It puts place over party, collaboration over conflict, and evidence over dogma. It is action oriented. It gets things done.

I like the quote they offer from former NY mayor, Michael Bloomberg: "As a result of the federal leadership vacuum, cities around the country have had to tackle our economic problems largely on our own. Local elected officials are responsible for doing, debating. For innovating, not arguing. For pragmatism, not partisanship. We have to deliver results at the local level."

There is a new book by Benjamin Barberr, *If Mayors Ruled the World...*

The point--let's look to our local leaders to influence and shape the future of this region. For the record, Katz and Bradley define leaders as coming from the private and non-profit sectors as well as the public sector.

10) Finally, we should all read the *Metropolitan Revolution*. It is full of both best practices and policy directions. It highlights what they call "The Living Laboratory." In particular, Katz and Bradley focus on four metros: NY City, Denver, Northeast Ohio, and Houston. I think there are lessons from each metro can be translated to policy choices for Inland Southern CA.

The point--if everyone in this room would read the book, it would have a transformative influence on San Bernardino County, and this region.