

UCR Green Leadership Summit

February 26, 2014

Thank you John Cook for the invitation to speak. I am a replacement for Anil Deolalikar, the dynamic Dean of UCR's new School of Public Policy. I am here as the Director of the Center for Sustainable Suburban Development or more simply, CSSD. It is one of two centers now in the School. The other is the Presley Center for Crime and Justice Studies.

Brief highlights--the first public policy graduate students will begin in the fall, 2015. Noteworthy, there are currently over 130 undergraduate majors in public policy. The campus objective is to become a leading school of practice and research, comparable to other outstanding public policy schools at USC, UCLA, and U. of Washington.

Inland Southern CA celebrated the start of UCR's School of Medicine. The School of Public Policy will likewise help define and influence the future of this region.

As the last speaker of the Green Leadership Summit, let me quickly make ten points.

1) This Leadership Summit is important. It is a first of its kind. It underscores the green aspirations, and objectives, of the City and UCR. It is symbolically important, and if we work together, it can be substantively important.

2) In retrospect, as Mayor of Riverside for 18 years, I take special pride in the city's progress as a sustainable city. Let me quote from the first page of the city's third version of the Green Action Plan:

"This Green Action Plan is aimed at solidifying Riverside, CA as a leader in clean and green practices. It began with a committee of citizens and has helped transform the City into an innovative, sustainable urban center."

In my view, Riverside should dedicate itself to becoming the greenest city in CA, and UCR the greenest campus in the UC system.

3) Why go green? It is good for the future. It is good for the pocket book. It is good for the soul. And it is good for the planet.

Going green means focusing on the three E's: environment, economy, and equity.

Any list of the best cities in the world is made up of those who lead in going green. Riverside and UCR should join cities like Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, Stockholm, and Vancouver.

One past marker--In 2011 at a green conference in Atlanta, sponsored by Siemens and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Riverside competed against Santa Monica and Jersey City to be the greenest among the middle size cities in America.

Those on the coast dismiss Inland Southern California. We are 909ers. The Urban Dictionary describes us as "a great place to live between Los Angeles and Las Vegas if you don't mind the meth labs, cows, and dirt people."

We need a different narrative. Why not an identity as an innovative, sustainable urban center that has the greenest city and the greenest campus in CA?

We can be a national best practice example to other cities, to other campuses.

4) How do we get there. It is time to be accountable. It is time to go beyond aspiration to action. It is time to go beyond abstractions to what we can measure.

Political Scientist Kent Portney has developed a useful index of how seriously cities take sustainability, and Riverside scores high.

However, the challenge now before Riverside, and UCR, is to make its sustainability initiatives happen. On point, published in 2013, the best book I have read is *The Guide to Greening Cities* by Johnston, Nicholas, and Parzen.

For the rest of my remarks, let me emphasize major implementation steps.

5) The STAR Program is a national best practice. It is a comparative way of measuring sustainability. It can compare the city's progress with other cities. Most importantly, if emphasized politically, it can define the city's commitments and priorities. STAR can set recognized and measurable standards for being green. Noteworthy, Riverside is one of 24 pilot cities in the country now testing the STAR measurements.

Full disclosure--when I was 2nd Vice President of the National League of Cities, Don Borut, the League's Executive Director, invited me into his office to meet with the head of ICLEI, Local Governments for Sustainability. We talked about starting the STAR Program. As a NLC officer, I pushed hard to make it happen.

6) CSSD, CE-CERT, and SC-RISE recently hosted a highly successful Conference titled "Solar Energy in Inland Southern CA: The Future is Now." The city's Public Utilities Department was a key sponsor.

In 2007, the city committed itself to be a model solar city. The future of solar energy is now in Riverside.

Goal 3 in the Green Action Plan is to install at least 20 MW of solar by 2020. It will happen!

The number of solar MW in the City is 8.2. It will be soon joined by 4 MW installed by UCR--and more could be coming on the campus. Further, a major community solar project up to 7 MW will soon be announced by Public Utilities for the Tequesquite Land Fill.

We have the sun. We have the research. The city is taking a lead position through the Public Utilities Department. Why not be a model solar city for Southern CA? Why not be a model solar campus for Southern CA?

7) UCR is a renowned research university. Research is also a critical resource in going green.

The School of Public Policy will provide an explicit policy focus for research on this region, and for the City of Riverside.

Two green research examples--first is Eastern Municipal Water District. They asked researchers at UCR to examine their innovative rate structure to see what differences it made in the use of water.

Second, there is a well-funded group of cross discipline doctoral students working on water issues. Last year, they did excellent work on the proposed Delta plan. This year they are looking at the City's Green Action Plan, and specifically at the Goals #16 and #17 for Water.

8) UCR is also a source of interns. They can help connect the campus with the community.

Two examples--today, I am delighted to announce the start of an important intern relationship between the city and UCR. The intern assignments will focus on sustainability, and the City's Green Action Plan. The city will pay for internships for two to four students, either undergraduate or graduate. UCR's Office of Sustainability will identify and recruit prospective students and city departments will select specific students. Only students who have taken some methodological training in sustainability will be eligible.

And second, the School of Public Policy has started a best practice internship program with at least 15 major public agencies in this region. In addition to the City of Riverside, they include both counties, the two Sheriffs, the cities of Corona, Murrieta, and Ontario, RCTC, SANBAG, SAWPA, WRCOG, Eastern and Western Water Districts, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

9) From my perspective this Leadership Summit should be held every year. Beyond talking/working together, it should have an explicit focus on implementing and measuring goals.

The overarching frame--the city is meeting its Green Action Goals, and here is how? And the campus is meeting the UC requirements for going green, and here is how?

Why not a once year show and tell?

10) Let me close with a quote from my favorite book on going green. The book is Thomas Friedman's *Hot, Flat and Crowded*.

"The world expects us to lead, the world needs us to lead, and our ability to thrive as a country in the future requires us to lead. We need to redefine green and rediscover America, and, in doing, renew, refresh, and reengineer our country and what it means to be an American. It is a daunting task, but also quintessentially American one. We have done it before, and now we must do in one more time."

Why not in Riverside? Why not at UCR?

Thank you....