

# Key West Vision 2020

## Fifteen Year Progress Review

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Draft "O" - November 2013

During 1998 and 1999 the Key West Chamber of Commerce crafted a vision for the future of Key West. This vision was drafted through a series of community forums. That process was intended to take into account what were seen as likely developments and preferences of residents and businesses to envision Key West in the year 2020 under the belief that unless we understood and agreed upon where we wanted Key West to be, we would "end up in a place we probably would not have chosen." The original 14 goals enumerated by the Key West Chamber's Vision 2020 Plan at that time were conceived as building blocks for a "where to go" piece rather than a "how to get there" piece.

In 2004, the Chamber revisited this Vision with a Five Year Progress Review ("Draft I"). Last year, a Fourteen Year Progress Review was undertaken (Draft "N" of November, 2012). These reviews attempted to measure progress and to determine where we need to go. This latest review updates trends and progress since that time to further gauge whether these goals continue to be appropriate and realistic or need to be modified. Further, this review is anticipated to be helpful in focusing objectives for the Key West Chamber of Commerce in the coming year.

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### By the Year 2020:

**Vision 2020 Goal 1: We will have achieved a balance of workforce to housing availability and affordability achieving the goal of no more than one third of income (when compared to 45% in 1998) necessary to fund housing costs of workers in our community.**

The downturn in the local as well as national real estate markets has lessened the severity of the workforce housing crisis compared with 1998. The median single family home in Key West sold for \$238,250 in 1998 and more than tripled in price to \$800,000 at its peak in 2005. Market correction throughout 2006-2012 saw 2012 prices for the median Key West single family home fall to \$439,000, still 92% more than the 1998 level.<sup>1</sup> To some extent, the market has taken care of the problem. Consider this example: If the median house price were still \$375,000, a moderate income family earning the 2012 median HUD income limit of \$72,400 would need \$13,125 for a 3½% down payment on a conforming FHA loan. After having done so, the percentage of income paid for housing assuming a low 4% interest rate would be 43% of income now compared with the 45% level in 1998, but still above the 33% rule-of-thumb envisioned in this goal. Note, however, that just four years ago, the 44% of income for housing paid now existing was 66% at the 2008 Tenth Year Progress Review. It has most assuredly improved. But there is no assurance given our idyllic climate and limited supply, that market conditions will remain favorable.

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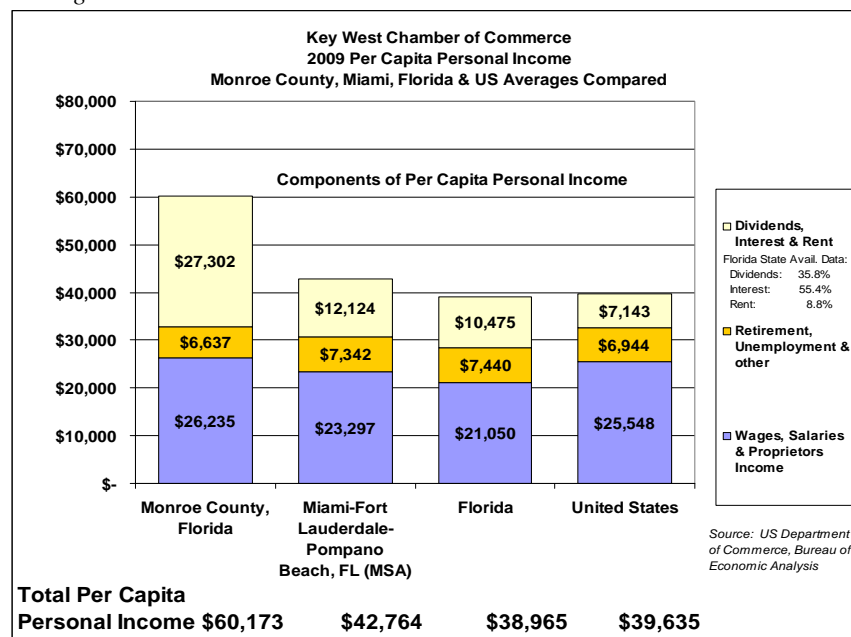
<sup>1</sup> Source: Monroe County Property Appraiser, qualified sales including short sales and bank sales

In February 2008 the partnership for Community Housing in partnership with the Rodel Foundation of Key West released the results of an Affordable Housing Needs Assessment for Monroe County. Based on 2006 data, the findings showed that respecting the standard 30% of income ratio for housing, “that 57 percent of owner households in Monroe County earning less than the area median income (AMI) are cost burdened. A striking 85 percent of renter households earning less than the AMI are cost burdened.” The study noted that the growth in the second home market and the accompanying rise in housing prices have contributed to the substantial loss of the County’s rental housing supply including mobile homes. Moreover, the study found that 91.3% of all jobs in Monroe County were in service-providing industries where the “vast preponderance of employment is found in low-wage earning occupations.”<sup>2</sup> The study concludes that the current housing affordability gap cannot be addressed without deep subsidies a heightened level of new workforce housing production. Finally, the study recommends that strategies should focus on infill development opportunities within these existing residential and job centers.

Although a seemingly dire outlook, the workforce housing issue in Key West is not without progress. A preliminary inventory of housing units drafted by the Key West Community Housing Committee indicates over 1,600 units of workforce housing exist in the city. Of these, 903 rental units are controlled by the Key West Housing Authority. These include the Senior Citizen Plaza (199 units), Poinciana Plaza (154 units from the Navy BRAC Commission), Porter Place (128), George Allen (117), Fort Village (84), Robert Gabriel (53), Key Plaza A (28 Section 8 units), Key Plaza B (38 Section 8 units), Patterson & 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets (6) and the Roosevelt Gardens Complex completed in the spring of 2004 (96 units). The Railway Condominiums were completed and sold-out in 2008. These consisted of 38 one and two bedroom units located adjacent to the market rate Steam Plant luxury condominiums. These ranged in price from \$170,000 to \$250,000, with monthly mortgage payments spanning \$1,000 to \$1,700, not including taxes and condominium fees which include insurance.

Other additions to the inventory in 2009-2013 included Flagler Village, a 49 unit, two & three bedroom townhome complex located at MacDonald Avenue in Stock Island. These are modular

<sup>2</sup> 2009 data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis for Per Capita Personal Income is shown on the following chart:



rental units erected on land owned by the county and deeded to be affordable housing for 50 years. Other projects included Habitat for Humanity activity comprising completion of four units of a three-quadruplex complex formerly known as the McIntyre Apartments on Stock Island. Bayside Landing, comprised of 18 two and three bedroom units at mile marker 10, was completed in 2010. Construction of eleven units on Eisenhower Drive with the Monroe County Land Authority began in December 2011. Lastly, Habitat for Humanity continues its “Brush with Kindness” program which is part of the national organization’s “Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative” designed to repair decaying properties especially for homeowners unable to financially make those repairs.

In 2011, Peary Court, former military housing, was sold to a private developer. After much disagreement about density and affordable housing requirements, the developer agreed to include forty-eight workforce units on the property among the 160 market-rate units. Although the project’s major development plan has yet to be finalized, the developers were required to have the forty-eight workforce units up and running within 30 days of the Peary Court sale. Those units are now filled.

Although not in the City of Key West, Stock Island is considered a source of affordable housing for Key West workers. Tortugas West, an 18 unit development was built and sold at the end of Maloney Avenue followed in 2006 by the 40 unit Park Village workforce housing developments. The Islander Village is a workforce housing complex of 89 two and three bedroom units priced at \$239,000 and \$299,750. Of these, 43 units are completed and occupied, 15 units sold and 28 units rented or rented-to-own. The developer anticipates the project’s remaining 46 units will be built in the coming year. Another project, Banyan Grove Residences, is nearing completion and will offer 48 affordable rental units in its twelve two-story buildings on Stock Island. This project is built on the former site of Pearl Trailer Park, which at one time held 91 trailer units.

There is concern that a reliable system to identify and enforce deed restrictions upon resale of affordable housing properties is not currently in place. Additional follow-up is needed to see that an effective system is installed to protect the current workforce housing supply. The City’s Planning department and the Housing Authority are collaboratively working on an updated inventory based on lifted, expired, new deed restrictions and new allocations. This inventory is not complete at this time but the Chamber will be notified as soon as it is available. This information is an essential piece of data in updating the Comprehensive Plan for the city which is also currently in process.

AIDS Help, a local non-profit, has completed a 50 unit one-bedroom apartment building at the Poinciana Plaza called Poinciana Royale funded by federal Stimulus monies. Ground breaking occurred in May 2010 and the complex was completed and opened in May 2011. It was filled within the first 1½ months of opening and is occupied by not only HIV/AIDS disabled but elderly and other disabled persons as well. AIDS Help currently has 46 other completed units in 4 separate facilities.

Budget considerations have further constrained the political will of both the City of Key West and Monroe County. Both have eliminated positions coordinating affordable housing programs. Notwithstanding, ordinances include those enacted October 2005 which established requirements of workforce work force housing to be in a ratio of 30% of all new market-rate multifamily residential housing or, in lieu of same, a \$200,000 per unit fee shall be contributed to the affordable housing workforce trust fund. Currently, the City is drafting changes to redevelopment ordinances that will work to ensure that all major redevelopment projects will be

subject to the 30% affordable housing requirement. Another ordinance passed in September 2008 established a Homebuyers Assistance Program wherein the City provide loans of up to \$20,000 interest free to help eligible persons meet down payment requirements to be approved by mortgage lenders for home loans.

In September 2009, the City Commission adopted the Housing Assistance Strategy for the City of Key West. This funding was made available by reducing Impact fees by 25% in exchange for a \$2 million share in this Florida Housing Finance Corporation Special Appropriation. It provides for zero-interest mortgage subsidy for 30 years to qualified home buyers in the City of Key West thru mile marker 12. The program design predominately assisted those in the moderate income category and 22 mortgages were subsidized.

A voter referendum to permit an Assisted Living and Independent Living Facility for Senior Citizens on Truman Waterfront land conveyed to the City by the Navy was overwhelmingly approved in October 2007. In October 2008, a resolution to approve a 99 year lease to implement that referendum concept plan was approved. Following the collapse of the proposed deal with Family Pride Corporation, the Florida Keys Assisted Care Coalition worked with Wendover Housing Partners on a new plan for an assisted living facility on the Truman waterfront. That plan ultimately was rejected as the developer and City could not agree on lease terms. If built, the Truman Village Senior Residential Community would have included a combination of 50 assisted care units and 50 independent living rental units. Of the 100 total units, the majority would have been classified as affordable units, and the rest rented at market rates. Estimated monthly rental rates were to range from \$1,000 to \$3,100; however a substantial portion of those costs were to be covered by assistance payments. Currently, the plan for an assisted-living facility is back to “square one”, with the City now looking at other site locations, including the former Easter Seals property on Stock Island and a site on Kennedy Drive.

**Vision 2020 Goal 2: Greater Key West’s resident population will be sufficient to sustain a quality hospital, schools, libraries and other public services on a year-round basis and to provide a large enough consumer base to maintain a viable and diversified local business.** *(Updated at Key West Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors retreat on November 18, 2011)*

The 2012 census of Key West population was 25,057 as reported by the *U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder* database. This is a 0.006% increase in population compared with the 24,909 reported in the 2011 census. This result for 2011 reverses a long period of decline dating back to 2000. The growth rate for Key West mirrors Monroe County’s 1.1% growth rate while slightly lagging Florida’s 1.4% growth rate. During the year, the United States as a whole experienced population growth at 0.7%.

The age profile of the Keys is significant. Although it is true that the United States has aged from a median age of 32.9 years in the 1990 census to 37.2 years of age in 2010, Monroe County has aged faster and is significantly older (from a median age of 38.7 year in 1990 to an estimated 46.4 years in 2010). Key West has aged even more quickly from 33.6 years in 1990 to 41.5 years in 2010. There have been decreases in the proportion of 20-44 year olds and a corresponding increase in the proportion of 45-64 year olds in both the County and Key West. For example, the Key West 20-44 year olds dropped from 49% of the population in 1990 to 39% in 2010. During this same time, the Key West 45-64 year olds grew from 18% of the population

in 1990 to 32% of the population in 2010. This, coupled with school populations that have declined over time indicate an exodus of young families (although the School District halted this trend in its census of October, 2010 with a small increase in enrollment). The increase in the 45-64 year olds, some immigrating with greater wealth could lead to a different consumer base. Although this could have potentially serious ramifications for sustaining a stable workforce, Key West still maintains a much larger percentage of 20-44 year olds (39%) than the county, the state or the country (31%-33%) so that, for now, a significant prime working-age labor pool appears to exist.

2012 saw the continued expansion of services at the Lower Keys Medical Center, including a cardiac catheterization lab, DaVinci surgical robot, an on-staff pain management physician, a full-time board-certified plastic surgeon, and a partial-hospitalization program (outpatient day program known as “Intensive Outpatient Care”) for their behavioral health department. The hospital plans to put in a second interventional procedures room.

**Vision 2020 Goal 3: We will have an expanded 10-month tourist season. Our visitors will more likely to arrive by boat or fly, arriving at improved dock facilities or the new, improved airport.**

The estimate of Key West visitors for 2012 was for 2,713,658 people, about four percent higher than the 2003 estimate of 2,619,000 visitors. However, the composition of the type of visitor has changed from 2003 quite dramatically with a shift of 256,000 less cruise ship passengers and 279,000 more overnight guests as shown below:

	2003	2012	Amount	Pct.
Key West Overnight Visitors	1,309,559	1,588,607	279,048	21%
Key West Day Trippers	242,268	311,337	69,069	29%
Cruise Ship Passengers	1,067,222	813,713	(253,509)	-24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,619,049</b>	<b>2,713,658</b>	<b>94,608</b>	<b>4%</b>

The zenith for cruise ships docking in Key West occurred in 2003. In the past five years, cruise ship passengers appear to have comfortably settled in the 800,000-850,000 range. On the other hand, although the overnight guest counts shows dramatic improvement at 21%, the latest data available from the TDC (2010) shows a greatly affected shortened average-length-of-stay per visitor. TDC analyses for hotel stays for the first half of 2010 indicate the average length of stay per visitor was 3.64 days whereas it was 5.19 days for the first half of 2009. This shortened stay, it is believed, is the result of a purposeful decision to stay within budgets during tough economic times rather than foregoing the vacation entirely.<sup>3</sup>

An analysis of airport arrivals as a gauge of overnight visitor activity would show that, **overall**, this latest five-year period (2008 thru 2012) is down by 0.08% from the previous five-year period (2003 thru 2007). However, the seasonal breakdown would show Off Season to be 7.33% **up**

<sup>3</sup> Monroe County Tourist Development Council; Smith Travel Research

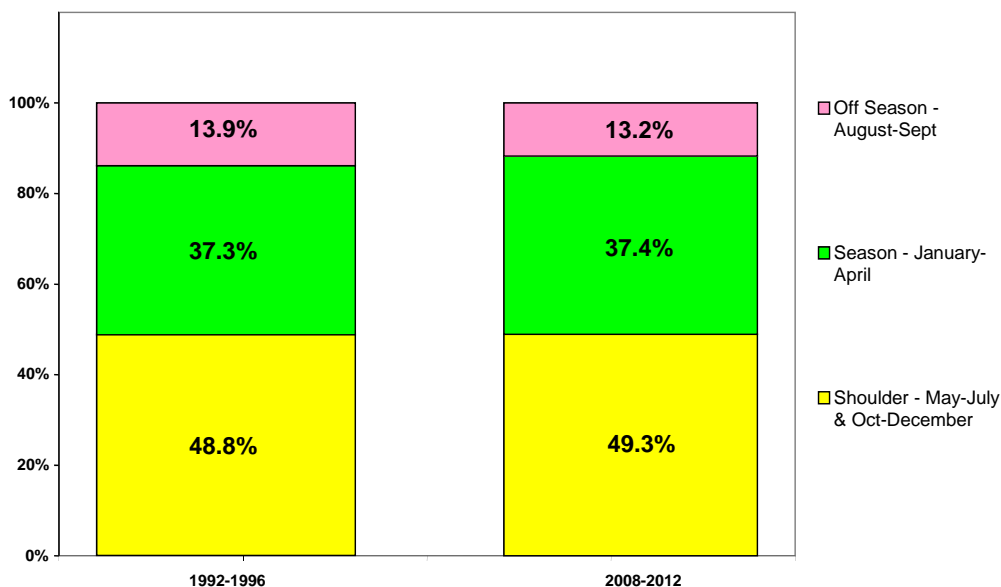
when comparing the latest five year period with 2003-2007 and the Shoulder Season **down** (0.52%) as can be seen below:

Pct Increase/Decrease from prior period:	2008-2012
High Season – January-April	-1.65%
Off Season - August-Sept	+7.33%
Shoulder - May-July & Oct-Dec	-0.52%
Total Year	-0.08%

The above table uses all five years' worth of data in a five-year period and compares it with all five years' worth of data from the immediately prior five-year period. Therefore, the four months of January through April from 2003 through 2007 represent five years of data (20 data points) that are compared with the same 20 data points from 2008 through 2012 to calculate the 1.65% decrease in high season results.

When all of the numbers are down, it could mean that other factors, such as the overall economy, has negatively affected all seasons. We, therefore, look at the *relative* performance of the seasons in each period to see if a growth trend has developed whereby either the off-season or the shoulder season volumes as a percent of total year volume have increased. Inspection of the chart below shows that neither season has increased. In fact, the January through April high season has grown from 37.3% in the 1992-1996 five-year period to 37.4% in the 2008-2012 five-year period.

**Key West Air Passenger Deplanements  
Seasonal Analysis**



Source: Key West International Airport

Despite the indications of the long-term trends, there is no doubt that the Key West Airport has continued enjoying a resurgence that began in 2010. Through the first eight months of 2013, deplanements are up 5.3% over 2012 record levels. The year could well end the year close to 400,000 deplanements, which would eclipse last year's record of 367,615 passengers. The addition of Southwest (formerly Air Tran) as a carrier into Key West in December 2009 has greatly boosted the numbers. Southwest Airlines finalized the acquisition of Air Tran during the fourth quarter of 2012. Contributing to the rising numbers of air passenger counts are new direct

Key West flights to New York, Washington DC and New Orleans. Further routes are reportedly also being considered, including direct flights to Dallas, Texas – which would open a new market for Key West tourism.

The Key West International Airport is experiencing record-breaking number of arrivals and an increasing array of destination cities, now including New Orleans, New York City and Washington DC. Last year, the airport welcomed 742,000 passengers, a 9.5% increase over 2011. August 2012 saw an increase of 15% over 2011. Overall, airport arrivals have increased 60% between January 2009 and December 2012. The airport estimates that its current capacity to be about a million passengers.

This success has enabled Key West International Airport to repay its \$30 million construction bond, for the new terminal building, 23 years earlier than the due date. The airport plans to resurface Faraldo Circle, the road that passes in front of the terminal, and add an EMAS (Engineered Material Arresting System) at the end of the runways. A current five-year plan calls for the relocation of the airport's rental car fleet, from hundreds of parking spaces directly in front of the terminal, to an area on the other side of the property.

This data does not criticize improving facilities or conceiving new non-season events in efforts to expand to a ten-month season, however, it is a sobering reminder that other factors, such as weather, national economic fluctuations and advertising programs may also be very powerful determinants of the tourism season.

#### **Vision 2020 Goal 4: We will have protected and enhanced our culture, image and experience as “America’s Caribbean Island.”**

There were a number of specific areas envisioned under this category to be protected and enhanced. The categories and the results are listed below

- **Eco-Tourism** - The 6,400 sq. ft. *Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center* was opened in 2007 on Truman Annex waterfront grounds. It provides interactive exhibits depicting the biodiversity of the Florida Keys and focuses on habitat and human interaction with those habitats. This is typified by both the *Mote Marine Laboratory Living Reef* exhibit which includes a 2,500-gallon reef tank with living corals and tropical fish, as well as a mock-up of *Aquarius*, which is an underwater lab located 3½ miles off the coast of Key Largo in 63 feet of water. *Aquarius* is the only such lab of its kind in the world and promotes ocean bottom study and exploration using saturation diving techniques. In July 2012, NOAA pulled funding of the *Aquarius* project. Florida International University (FIU) has taken over operation of the *Aquarius* project and believes it will be an important part of its program.

The *Key West Botanical Gardens*, established in 1930, comprises 7½ acres consisting of an arboretum, botanical garden, wildlife refuge and educational center and is home to many endangered and threatened tropical flora and fauna. It is also a major migratory stopping point for neo-tropical birds from places as far as South America, as well as being home to many rare birds in the Florida Keys. The Botanical Gardens has completed a \$750,000 project to restore a fresh water pond, build boardwalks and provide

native orchids and landscaping that opened in April, 2009 and a Miami-Blue Butterfly habitat has been built as an add-on to that project.

An important step to preserve our natural reefs was taken in May 2009 with the sinking of the USNS General Hoyt S. Vandenberg seven miles off Key West. Culminating 13 years of effort and costing over \$8 million, this is the world's second-largest vessel purposely sunk to become an artificial reef. The sinking provides the added benefit of providing a world class SCUBA diving, snorkeling and fishing attraction.

- **Marine Sanctuary** - In 2002, the International Maritime Organization designated 3,000 square nautical miles as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA), one of only thirteen in the world. As such, strict limits to vessel size, fishing activity and No Discharge Zones exist. The Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Sanctuary Enforcement team patrols the area. As the "nation's only living barrier coral reef," it includes all of the Keys extending to the Dry Tortugas.

The board of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is currently updating the organization's comprehensive plan. In June 2012, a series of meetings were held throughout the Florida Keys; these meetings were conducted to gather public opinions and comments on marine management issues. The Key West Chamber of Commerce provided comments on the Cut B channel widening via an electronic letter. In October, the issue was put to voters via a binding referendum, asking if they support a study to investigate the feasibility of widening the channel. Key West residents voted against the referendum by a large majority, with 74% voting against it. In response, the City Commission passed a resolution to inform the Army Corp. of Engineers of the outcome of the vote which expressed resident's clear opposition to studying channel widening to accommodate larger cruise ships.

- **History** – Our most recent honor respecting preservation of our history was in having the Florida Keys Overseas Highway designated as an All-American Road in October 2009 one of five highways to receive the prestigious accolade this year. Thus far, 31 American roads are designated as All-American by the National Scenic Byways program directed by the Federal Highway Administration.

Former first lady Laura Bush honored Key West with her "Preserve America" award. Key West was one of eight cities nationwide so honored at the time and the only city in Florida.

In November 2012, Key West was named one of the 12 "Prettiest painted Places in America" in a national competition sponsored by the Paint Quality Institute. Winners were chosen by geographic region, and Key West was judged the prettiest painted large town in the southeastern region. The application for this national competition was submitted by the Key West Chamber of Commerce (through our public relations firm, Newman and Associates) on behalf of the City of Key West.

In January 2013, the Key West Firehouse Museum opened its doors at the corner of Virginia and Grinnell Streets after 21 years of planning and \$600,000 in grants and donations. Built in 1907, the building was home to Fire Station No. 3 and is one of the oldest fire stations in the State of Florida. On display are a 1929 fire truck, the old fire



bell, and the only known collection of Cuban firefighter memorabilia in the United States.

Further strides have been made to preserve our history and culture through our museums and theatres. The Mel Fisher Maritime museum attained the highest recognition that a museum can achieve accreditation by the American Association of Museums (AAM). A nine year, \$9 million restoration of the custom house was completed by the Key West Art & Historical Society and the Customs House was saluted as the Best Museum in Florida by the Florida Monthly Magazine. The Red Barn theatre underwent extensive renovations thanks in part to TDC bed tax funding and the Tropic Cinema has expanded and renovated its facilities also thanks in part to TDC funding. Honoring a great American playwright, the Tennessee Williams Theater on the campus of the Florida Keys Community College hosts a variety of cultural events.

The Studios of Key West is a nonprofit organization founded in 2006 and based at the Historic Key West Armory. Managed by a professional staff and governed by a volunteer board of community leaders, its mission is to support local creative people, celebrate the island's unique heritage and sense of place, and foster new collaboration and artistic production. Offerings include a robust schedule of classes and workshops in diverse artistic endeavors including Painting Boot Camp and advanced oil and watercolor art courses, writing, screenplay, poetry and songwriting. The Studios of Key West have very recently purchased the former Scottish Rite Masonic Center at 533 Eaton St. for \$2.2 Million dollars. The new building is nearly twice the size of the Armory at 14,000 square feet, and just one block off Duval Street. The distinctive Art Deco-style building will undergo extensive renovations, including a 200-seat theater, large gallery spaces, nine artist studios, two classrooms and a digital media lab. The current plan is for a Fall 2014 grand opening.

The Key West Sculpture Garden, conceived and funded by local residents, inaugurated its busts and stands open to all residents and visitors as a testament to important figures in our history. Mallory Square also features the Key West-Florida Keys Historic War Memorial. The memorial project, conceived and undertaken by local residents in partnership with the military, was completed in 2003. The memorial consists of 10 stations, nine of which offer historical information regarding different military actions in which Key West or the Florida Keys played a major role.

In June of 2003, in honor of the 50th anniversary of the end of Truman's presidency, the Harry S. Truman Little White House held the first ever Truman Symposium. The symposium began an annual series exploring the legacy of President Truman and its effects upon today's society. This event is held every May in cooperation with the Truman Library at Independence, Missouri and was covered by C-SPAN in 2010. This series has spawned another series, begun in February, 2011 which featured presidential offspring and is scheduled to feature first ladies in coming years.

The Key West Maritime Memorial Museum was created in December 2006 by bringing the historic 1934 Coast Guard vessel USS Mohawk cutter for exhibit at the Truman Waterfront. In November 2009, the Mohawk was joined by the USCGC Ingham originally commissioned in 1936. Lacking funds to maintain it, the Mohawk was sunk off the shore of Lee County, Florida in July 2012. It is now part of an artificial reef system.

Key West Historic Marker Tour was established to educate visitors and residents alike of the historic importance of Key West through its landmark properties. The concept uses a physical marker fronting an historic structure which bears a telephone number and unique marker number permitting free 24 hour access to a 90 second narration giving the history, architecture, influential occupants and facts related to the site. On a walking tour, the visitor will be able to access a targeted 400 historic sites throughout Key West and the Florida Keys to hear an audio tour about the specific location. To date, 54 markers are in place and operational.

The monument to the African Cemetery on Higgs Beach adjacent to the West Martello Tower has been completed and dedicated. This site memorializes the last casualties of the slave trade in the United States. A group is working to have this site designated a World Heritage site.

- **Lifestyle** - Key West's unique lifestyle continues to be honored in many ways. The slogan developed by resident J.T. Thompson, "One Human Family" became the official city philosophy in 2000 and continues to be heard as a voice of tolerance around the world. As reported in The Citizen Newspaper, then-Mayor Weekley said the motto was chosen "so others can find inspiration to grow beyond the artificial limitation of racism, nationalism, sexism, classism, monotheism, prejudice and homophobia."

In 2003, Key West garnered national attention and inspired a documentary film as over 2,000 resident and visitor volunteers unfurled a massive rainbow banner down Duval Street touching both oceans. Documentary filmmaker Talmadge Heyward summed up the sentiment of the City by saying, "In Key West I found a society that really had no blinders on. People saw others as individuals, and not what color they were or what their sexual orientation was."

Key West is also making strides toward improving resident lifestyles by building more green space for its residents to enjoy. Plans for the Truman Waterfront property conveyed to the City by the Navy include a mandatory 60% of the 33 acres for a park.

- **Duval Street Corridor Improvements** – The City has worked closely with the Duval Street businesses and Waste Management to clean up Duval Street. Since 1989 the Key West Chamber of Commerce has acted as a catalyst in this effort through its *Clean and Green Committee*. Waste Management has been an ally to the City in determining the most unobtrusive and efficient ways of storing and removing garbage. The City has invested in a street cleaner to further improve the streets. Street cleaning after Fantasy Fest parades are routinely and efficiently begun following the parades and finished by noon of the following day. A volunteer campaign to improve the image of the city by removing T-shirts with offensive language from Duval storefronts had limited success. The 2013 Key West City Budget includes \$65,000 to study Duval Street design improvements.
- **Special promotions for locals sponsored by businesses organized by the Key West Chamber** - Chamber-sponsored "We Love Locals" campaigns were begun in the summer of 2007 and were met with great success whereas the Thanksgiving-Christmas holiday venue for the same promotion was only moderately successful. This program has morphed into a website-based program, "Shell-Out Less", whereby Key West Chamber

members continued to offer special discounts to restaurants, bars, lodging, retail stores, water activities, attractions other professional services to local residents through its website. Since December of 2012, the Chamber has been including businesses on North Roosevelt Boulevard affected by the FDOT North Roosevelt Boulevard Project. The Chamber initialized the “Best of the Boulevard” program for members and non-members encouraging the use of coupon at affected businesses. The Chamber expended over \$8,500 in advertising to promote locals to buy from their friends and neighbors who either operate or are employed by the North Roosevelt businesses.

- **Panhandlers** – The City passed ordinances in 2002 and 2003 to make aggressive panhandling and panhandling in Clinton Square, Mallory Square and the Southernmost Point a punishable offense. In 2012, the City passed an additional ordinance limiting panhandling in the tourism corridors. The new ordinance established two specific areas (one at Mallory Square and one across from Key West Bight in an empty lot on Caroline Street) as the only areas where non-aggressive panhandling is allowed.
- **Street Vendors** – An ordinance was approved in April 2011 defining areas in which street vendors and performers could and could not be located. The Artisan & Performer Corridor was designated as an area wherein vendors and performers could locate with city issued permits. This area was defined as the sidewalks of Duval Street from Front Street to Petronia Street including all intersecting side streets up to but not including Whitehead Street and Simonton Street. Further, a Duval Street Corridor Cultural District being an area wherein vending and performing is not permitted was also defined. This area is sidewalks on Duval Street from Petronia Street to South Street including all intersecting streets up to but not including Whitehead Street and Simonton Street. Commissioner Weekley asked that Clinton Square and Whitehead Street from Front Street to Eaton Street also be incorporated into the area free from vendors and performers as a very congested area. This motion was supported by the Chamber. City Commission continues to evaluate the issue of street vendors. A resolution further limiting locations of street vendors and performers was postponed until December 2013.
- **Vagrancy** - The State Attorney’s Office has completed and forwarded its findings to the Mayor and City Attorney of the City of Key West regarding Florida Constitutional law respecting vagrancy issues. Key West’s climate, tolerance and the currently state of the economy have combined to cause vagrancy to become an issue at the present time. To a great extent, this issue is closely intertwined with the broader Homeless issue. The Mayor of Key West has made homelessness a priority and is endeavoring to improve the situation by supporting the mobile homeless outreach vehicle coordinated by the Southernmost Homeless Assistance League (SHAL). The 15-month pilot program utilized a converted 31 foot RV and is to be staffed by a driver, case manager and, in January, nurses from the FKCC nursing school. The unit became operational in November, 2011. Additionally, SHAL and the city hosted a public forum on the homeless presented by Dr. Robert Marbut who described “transformative” approaches currently in place at cities such as San Antonio, and Clearwater. The City substantially funds the 150-bed Keys Overnight Temporary Shelter (KOTS) for the homeless on Stock Island. SHAL is going through modifications with other agencies, but will continue to oversee the KOTS facility. In 2013, in response to a lawsuit filed by Sunset Marina adjacent to the KOTS facility, the City of Key West has committed to move KOTS to a new location. The City is currently analyzing site options, including a full-service homeless center.

**Vision 2020 Goal 5: We will be recognized as one of the “cleanest small cities” in the U.S. as measured against an objective national standard.**

*Clean Sweep* was organized in 1998 as an original Chamber of Commerce committee which evolved into the Chamber's "*Clean and Green Committee*" which had as its vision "To have a noticeable lack of litter on the City's rights-of-way, beaches and shores, and on private property so that Key West will remain an unspoiled uniquely wonderful place to live." That Committee was taken over by the City as the "*Keep Key West Clean and Green.*" The committee had, for some time, met twice monthly in the Angela Street City Hall with a formal agenda, list of assigned tasks and actions items. Accomplishments had included organizing City-wide all-volunteer clean-up days. The existence of this group directly supports this Vision 2020 Goal. The Key West Chamber of Commerce has also acted as a catalyst in this effort through its *Clean and Green Committee*. With the resignation of its coordinator from city staff to seek other employment, this committee has not met on a regular basis although the General Services department of the City continues to supply trash pick-up bags for any group taking the initiative to sponsor a clean-up event. The city is recruiting a replacement for the fulltime position but it is unclear whether or not coordinating the committee will resume as part of the position's duties without greater community support.

An easy and cost-effective program would be stronger enforcement of littering and dumping regulations and ordinances already in place. Both state and local regulations prohibit littering and have established enforcement sections. However, due to other more pressing or agency driven responsibilities, the enforcement of litter regulations take a low priority. Also, when a litter enforcement action is taken by an enforcement agency, the courts normally view it as a minor infraction and something that takes up already precious court time and resources. Local Politicians and High-level officials must make prevention programs a priority and support them with adequate funding, access to equipment and labor resources. In addition, department staff must work with available resources to carry out the program and report accomplishments back to high-level authorities.

Local ordinances and state laws already exist or can be developed to discourage illegal dumping and littering. However, ordinances and laws are ineffective without a commitment from high-level authorities for enforcement. For example, police officers must have the support of their command, and the police department must have the support of the court system. In addition, if illegal dumping and littering is not viewed as a priority and little action is taken, residents become frustrated and stop contacting police or local officials to report problems. Residents must be encouraged to persist in contacting different local, county and state agencies until they find an individual who is responsive to their concerns. Local authorities such as police, health, environment, public works, and sanitation departments must work together and with local communities. Such coordination allows sharing of resources and helps avoid duplication of effort.

An Objective National Standard should be adopted, as a quantitative tool for analysis regarding “cleanest small city.” Miami Beach and their “Public Area Cleanliness Index & Assessment Program” is an excellent example of a cost-effective and results oriented program.

*Florida Keys GLEE* (Green Living & Energy Education) is another organization that, through its regular dissemination of information, attendance at events and annual expo seeks to educate individuals, businesses and policy makers within the Florida Keys to promote sustainable living through efficient and renewable energy and the conservation of water and land resources. Throughout 2009, *GLEE* was afforded a monthly forum at City Commission meetings to update the public and the Commission on its extensive efforts to educate and promote recycling in the city. These efforts as well as Waste Management’s conversion to single-stream recycling and expansion of recycling materials (from codes #1 - #3 to codes #1 - #7) did little to improve the City’s recycling rate which averages about 6% of its solid waste output. In September 2010, the City Commission approved the development of a Solid Waste Master Plan for the city. Kessler Consulting performed a two year study of the solid waste and recycling issues in the City of Key West. A preliminary report on the findings was presented to City Commission in August 2012. Key West, up until very recently, continued to have a very low overall recycling rate of fewer than 10%. The City of Key West purchased larger, single-stream recycling carts, which Waste Management distributes and manages. Through the use of these carts and more intensive education, recycling rates tripled in the first four weeks, and was 21% during the week of Fantasy Fest 2013. At this time, we have a rate that is consistently above 20%. Considering that residential waste is only 39% of our overall trash stream, it is a respectable number, however we can do better. The City’s solid waste coordinator recently stated that attention will now be focused on increasing commercial recycling, the source of 61% of the City’s waste stream.

The City will soon be hosting several round table discussions with business owners who currently recycle and any business owners interested in hearing firsthand how they can make recycling work for their business. "With 61 percent of the city's waste stream coming from commercial sources, increasing business recycling is crucial to increasing our overall recycling rate. Many business owners are surprised to find out how much money they can save on their solid waste collection bill by recycling. It can be pretty significant. We want to hear from any business interested in recycling. We can help in organizing your space, finding room for additional recycling containers, and educating your staff. When an owner finds out how much money they have literally been throwing away by not recycling, they tend to be a bit surprised, we'll help them over that and start putting the savings back on their bottom line."<sup>4</sup>

Further improvements are planned in cooperation with the “Florida Department of Environmental Protection,” and “Florida Recycles.”

In 2013, the City received an award from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for being the Best Operator of a Wastewater Treatment plant of its size. In the coming year, the plant, located on Fleming Key, will receive repairs from damage from hurricane Wilma, along with upgrades to piping over the Fleming Key Bridge. Future plans include a solar power system for the plant in an effort to save on its \$800,000 annual electric bill.

In November 2013, billing for solid waste will become part of residents’ property tax bills, increasing the efficiency and yield of bill receipts. Last year when fees were moved from the

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<sup>4</sup> Mr. Will Thompson, Solid Waste Coordinator for the City of Key West, “Key West Recycles.”

City to FCAA resulting in cost savings, allowing the City to eliminate two personnel position from their respective department.

The city's current trash service contract with Waste Management is expiring at the end of 2014 and will be going to bid, the first time since 2000.

**Vision 2020 Goal 6: Beaches along the entire South side of Key West will be restored and accessible by the public.**

Smathers Beach restoration was first completed in 2000. South Beach, Rest Beach and the White Street Pier have been significantly restored. The Southernmost monument has been restored and a protective barrier built. The FDOT road rebuilding program for South Roosevelt Boulevard was completed providing smooth four-lane traffic as well as a wide walking/biking promenade. The city spent budgeted funds for 2011-2012 of \$39,600 for renourishment of Smathers Beach and \$33,800 for renourishment of Rest Beach. These amounts were funded from the city's general fund demonstrating its commitment to the tourism industry. These renourishment amounts were in addition to \$589,800 spent on beach cleaning at all of the city's beaches. For 2012-2013, \$673,200 is budgeted for beach cleaning at Smathers and at Rest beaches. Additionally, large renourishment projects are scheduled for both beaches. In the upcoming fiscal year, Smathers Beach has budgeted funds of \$522,900 with \$187,500 of that amount coming from a TDC grant. The budget for beach renourishment on Rest beach is \$323,200 for 2012-2013.

In 2012, the city of Key West removed parking meters from Smathers Beach providing free parking to visitors and locals alike. This allows for easier beach access year-round.

Higgs Beach, owned by Monroe County, has been enhanced by increased County Sheriff patrols of the property coupled with restroom facilities improvements, new signage and greater attention to cleanliness. In 2012, a new playground was built on the beachside of Atlantic Boulevard. This allows the users of the playground easy access to the bathroom without crossing the busy road. These improvements have led to a notable increase in use of the beach by both visitors and locals alike over the past few years. The Sheriff's Department continues to patrol the beach with 5½ hour shifts, seven days per week on an irregular basis.

A Master Plan has been drawn to reroute Atlantic Boulevard to join the beach, restrooms, and the old playground onto the same Oceanside of the street thereby creating a center for an otherwise scattered park area and eliminating a safety issue with children crossing the street. Further, the plan includes safe pedestrian and bicycle ways, traffic calming roadway design, landscape and shade improvements and improved connectivity between park uses and adjacent land uses such as Indigenous Park and Bocce Courts. Additionally, community needs have been met that include elements that address safety and vagrancy concerns. This is a long-term project with a 10-15 year time horizon to be implemented in phases as funding becomes available.

**Vision 2020 Goal 7: We will be a highly walkable and bikeable island – walking the waterfront on publicly accessible beaches, sidewalks or boardwalks from East Martello Tower to the Key West Bight will be possible.**

Boardwalks along Key West Bight and a bridge in Mallory Square behind the aquarium make walking along the waterfront on the bay side of the Island from the Conch Republic Marina and Land's Edge Village to Truman Waterfront possible (except for the stretch from the Galleon Resort and Marina on Front Street to Mallory Square). Also on the bay side of the island, walkers and bicyclists can follow sidewalks along the waterfront from the entrance to Key West along North Roosevelt to the other side of the Palm Ave Bridge.

With the City's acquisition of the Truman Waterfront property, more plans are being discussed for connecting boardwalks to extend the path even further. Tentative plans have been discussed to connect the Truman Waterfront Property to the south end of the Westin property on Mallory Square by bridging Admiral's Cut. This is intended to link the Outer Mole dock to Mallory Square via a totally waterfront route. Currently, the owners of the property have not agreed to the bridge concept. With these extensions nearly the entire waterfront will be pedestrian accessible, except for the Navy properties.

On the Atlantic side of the Island, walking and biking on pathways and sidewalks is possible along the waterfront from the entrance to Key West along South Roosevelt to the Southernmost Point monument, with a few interruptions from private waterfront properties.

Elsewhere along the island, other improvements have been made to increase pedestrian and bicyclist accessibility. A bridge has been built at the end of Staples Avenue to connect bicyclists and pedestrians to the adjoining neighborhood and allow better access to North Roosevelt sidewalks. Beach improvements and major roadway and pedestrian promenade construction along South Roosevelt have provided a scenic uninterrupted 3½ mile trail frequented by locals and visitors alike from the entrance to Key West to Atlantic Avenue.

The Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail is a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian facility currently under design and construction by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection using FDOT construction. Stretching from mile marker 106.3 in Key Largo to mile marker 0 in Key West, the project will provide an alternative transportation route throughout the Keys for foot and bicycle traffic. There are currently 70 miles of existing bike paths spread throughout the Key that are included in the project the longest section of which is from mile marker 106 to the Village of Islamorada (34 miles). An additional 31 miles are currently under construction with the balance either designed or scheduled for construction. Plans include connecting the Key West Botanical Gardens to the trail in partnership with the Florida Keys Scenic Corridor Alliance.

In October 2009, the Overseas Highway was designated an All-American Road under the National Scenic Byways program. This prestigious designation is held by only 30 other US roadways. The distinction should benefit tourism as well as future highway grant funding.

**Vision 2020 Goal 8: Our City's infrastructure, i.e. communications, power, water and sewer lines, roads, sidewalks, city buildings and equipment will be in good shape and will be on a coordinated maintenance plan extending out until at least 2040.**

Enormous progress has been made and the City's successful utility projects have become a model for the rest of the county. The City has completed its rebuilding of the sanitary sewer system.

The Army Corps of Engineers has allocated a total of \$9.947 million in funding for Key West sewer and storm water improvement projects as of September 2009. This money has been appropriated and used as part of Stimulus funding. All projects have been completed and the City is currently being reimbursed from the Corps. We also have received \$300,000 in funding from the South Florida Water Management District and \$3.2 in other state and federal grants.

Our telecommunications infrastructure improvements include ISDN, DSL, digital cable city-wide, and point-to-point wireless networks in city facilities only, all of which did not exist in 1998. In 2008, Keys Energy Services constructed a fiber optics loop line around the City of Key West extending into Marathon. The network has resulted in savings in excess of \$100,000 per year compared with traditionally leased communication lines. The network is utilized by several government agencies, bringing those entities savings as well. Additionally, this fiber optic backbone will support future deployment of wireless services. In 2012, Key West started receiving coverage via the 4G LTE network.

Improvements have been made in connection services to our public utilities. Keys Energy now offers next day hook up service, and in many cases can offer same day connections. KEYS is undertaking a multi-million dollar upgrade project to make the distribution system more resilient to hurricanes. Approximately 3,000 wood poles have been replaced with concrete poles rated to withstand 150 mph winds. All new facilities will meet this high wind load standard. As part of its hurricane upgrades, KEYS is relocating facilities that are in the backyard, or inaccessible locations, to the front of homes along public roadways. This relocation will speed restoration times. \$720,000 has been budgeted by Keys Energy for 2012 project costs, the first year of this multi-year effort. Additionally KEYS has been designated a Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) by the American Public Power Association recognizing the utility for its reliable distribution system and its focus on safety and training. It is KEYS goal to maintain that RP3 designation.<sup>5</sup>

KEYS is currently in the design stage for an upgrade to Key West Substation (KWD), located at the end of Angela Street, to improve long-term power capacity for the Downtown area and for the Outer Mole future development. This project is expected to go to bidding in 6 months and construction to begin in 18 months.

Street and sidewalk improvements continue throughout the City. The City has received FDOT Stimulus and Safe Routes to School funding for road, sidewalk, and bike lane improvements for Flagler Avenue (completed), Duck Avenue sidewalks and bike lanes (completed in 2012) and College Road (completed in 2012). FDOT completed major improvements to South Roosevelt Boulevard by constructing a new seawall, widening and improving the pedestrian promenade used for walking, running, roller-blading and biking. Eaton Street was repaved in 2011 by a

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<sup>5</sup> Mrs. Lynne E. Tejada, General Manager & CEO, Keys Energy Services.



joint City/County project. The Caroline Street Corridor is slated for improvements from Elizabeth Street to Trumbo Road incorporating themed sidewalks and bike paths and signage utilizing TIF monies from the Caroline Street Corridor and the Bahama Village Community Redevelopment Agency. In September 2013, the City Commission authorized the allocation of \$600,000 from the Caroline Street Corridor TIF Fund for the third phase of funding for the project. This project is expected to commence work in early 2014.

In April 2012, the FDOT started an improvement of North Roosevelt Boulevard with construction by the de Moya Group, located in Miami, Florida. The construction extends from the front of the Marriott Beachside Resort to Jose Marti Drive. When complete, it will encompass reconstruction of the seawall and promenade on the Gulf side, reconstruction of (4) 11-foot lanes and (1) 10 foot center turning lane and provision of a 6-ft sidewalk on the interior (land) side of the highway. All sewer lines will be replaced, and storm water issues will be addressed. New lighting will be provided as well as landscaping and traffic signals replaced. Construction is expected to be complete in July 2014 at a total estimated cost of \$41 million.

Major capital projects will commence in 2014 to 2016 in an effort to alleviate frequent flooding in low-lying neighborhoods. About to be completed, the George Street Stormwater Project, a \$4MM project, includes a new pump station in the HOB neighborhood. Currently under design is a rebuild of the existing Simonton Street pump station, and \$800K project, which is to be improved with a new outfall at Simonton Street beach. Another project in the planning stage is the "East Front Street Drainage Project", which plans: a.) re-route a stormwater drainage pipe down Front Street to an outfall on Mallory Square; b.) increase size of the Duval Street storm drain openings; and c.) construct five new gravity wells.

In conjunction with the North Roosevelt Boulevard Project, the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority is replacing all of its transmission and distribution water lines below the roadways. These replacements will occur between Eisenhower Drive and the Triangle at the entrance to the island. Phase 1, which is 50% complete, encompasses a replacement of all of the transmission lines leading to the islands' pump station. All of the conduit distribution lines will be replaced in Phase 2, which will commence after Phase 1 is complete.

In October 2012, county officials broke ground on the new \$3.5 million Stock Island Fire Station 8 on the four lots surrounding the current station at the corner of MacDonald and Maloney Avenues.

October 2013 marked the official groundbreaking for construction of the new Angela Street fire station. The project is expected to cost \$5.9 million, and when done in late 2014, will be two-story first class fire station, with three engine bays. The project includes a 70-spot parking lot, public restrooms and a park, complete with a fountain. Plans call for improved drainage, with improvements to the landscaping and streetscape.

There is \$17.5 million of reserve funds set aside to provide a new building for City Hall. In September 2012, City Commission voted to use a renovated Glynn R. Archer Elementary School as the new Key West City Hall. In September 2013, the City officially took ownership of the deed for Glynn R. Archer School from the School District. Final plans are being completed and work is expected to begin in early 2014.

## **Vision 2020 Goal 9: A linkage will exist with Cuba for the benefit of Key West.**

Despite tight travel restrictions during the Bush administration, two fact-finding trips were taken wherein Key West Chamber officials met with counterparts from the Havana Chamber of Commerce as well as a highly positioned representative of the Ministry of Tourism. Additionally, meetings were held with Sr. Pedro Alvarez Borrego, Chairman & CEO of Empresa Comercializadora de Alimentos (ALIMPORT), who represents a key relationship for future United States/Cuba business dealings.

With the change in leadership in both the United States and Cuba there has come an easing of travel restrictions for certain US citizens to Cuba. President Obama officially loosened Cuba travel and money remittance policies in April 2010, allowing Cuban-Americans to send money to family on the island and to visit them once a year. While not a lifting of the travel ban for all Americans, the issue has gained support.

In January 2013, Cuba is easing travel restrictions for its residents. This change will permit most Cubans to travel abroad without seeking official approval. Additionally, most Cubans will no longer need an official exit visa or a letter of invitation from a resident in their destination country in order to travel abroad. As the relationship between the United States and Cuba continues to improve, Key West is well-positioned to be the first stop for Cuban visitors.

With urging and support from the Key West Chamber of Commerce, in July 2009, Peter Horton, director of the recently renovated Key West International Airport sent a letter to the Treasury Department urging the addition of Key West to the list of three existing U.S. International Airports with approved flights to Cuba: Miami, Los Angeles and New York. Mr. Horton cited Key West's proximity to Cuba, its sizable Cuban-American community nearby and rich Cuban-American history as factors sustaining a market for charter flights. In June 2010, the Key West Chamber wrote to Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen to solicit her help to petition the U.S. Department of the Treasury and U.S. Customs to add the EYW air terminal and the Port of Key West Marine facilities as Cuban Ports of Entry.

The City of Key West passed a resolution September 21, 2010 supporting the establishment of the City of Key West as an air and sea port of entry and exit to Cuba and directing distribution of that resolution to all members of the Florida Congressional delegation, the President of the United States and the leadership of the House and Senate. The Key West Chamber also wrote a letter to Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen endorsing the City's resolution on November 18, 2010 with copies to all county and city officials as well as Senators Bill Nelson and then Senator-Elect Marco Rubio.

On October 4, 2011 Mr. Horton was informed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) that Key West International Airport had met the criteria and had been approved to offer passenger air service to and from Cuba with aircraft carrying no more than ten passengers per flight due to current limitations of the facility. Phase II of the U.S. Customs expansion is slated to begin in the near future and will increase capacity from 10 to 70 international passengers - a requirement for Port of Entry status for flights to and from Cuba.

In addition to the opening of the ferry terminal and the improved Key West International Airport terminal, plans included in the Navy's Economic Conveyance of the Truman Waterfront property called for a City marina that would service mega-yachts that would further enhance that

linkage. Meisel-Spottswood Marina Management was awarded the Marina project in September 2010 and had drawn plans and a lease agreement with the City for its development. Those plans were eliminated when in early 2013 the Navy informed the City that civilian use of the basin was not permitted.

Meanwhile, the largest deepwater marina in the Florida Keys, formerly known as Safe Harbor, is undergoing a major redevelopment – now named Stock Island Marina Village. Should Mariners be permitted travel to Cuba, this marina could become an important linkage between the islands.

**Vision 2020 Goal 10: Discharge of Key West generated water pollutants will have been reduced by at least 80%.**

The City has made enormous progress and this vision is likely to become a reality far ahead of schedule. An 80% reduction in Key West generated water pollutants is expected to be achieved. The rebuilding of the sanitary sewer system has taken the City a long way towards achieving this goal. The City is now working towards improving its stormwater system.

Respecting waste water treatment, the City received four top awards at the 2007 Florida Water Resources conference held by the Florida Water Environment Association, including first place in the Advanced Secondary Treatment category. It also won the Collection System award based on inflow and infiltration reduction, the Operations Excellence Award and the Top Ten Safety Award. In 2008 the city announced, for the third time, the city's wastewater treatment was awarded one of two Phelps awards; which have been described as an unprecedented achievement in the State of Florida. By 2010, all waste water plants are to conform with the so-called "5,5,3 and 1" measurement of 5 parts per million (ppm) of Biochemical Oxygen Demand, 5ppm of total suspended solids, 3ppm of ammonia/nitrogen, and 1ppm of total phosphorous. The City's plant already meets this criterion.

The City tests both public and private laterals for infiltration and exfiltration. During 1998-1999, the city undertook its first test of private property laterals. The City tested 14,266 and failed 8,462 (59% failure rate). They retested and were able to pass all but 17 after repairs. In its second test of private property laterals the City tested 6,282 and failed 2,732 (43%). Aggressive testing and remedial action is credited with reducing overall wastewater inflows at the treatment plant almost in half with concurrent Influent & Infiltration level reductions. Although no further direct testing of this nature has been conducted, the City is confident that the success of the program is evident by the amount of infiltration that has been reduced by virtue of lateral repairs. In 1999, there were 7.5 million gallons per day (gpd) taken in for treatment at the processing plant whereas OMI (the contract operator of the sewer treatment plant) today reports 4.5 million gpd being received.

In addition, a stormwater capital plan has been developed to prevent flooding, divert stormwater flow from outfalls, and reduce/eliminate discharge of pollutants and contamination of near shore waters. There were 26 gravity injection wells constructed in 2010. Plans to complete 4 additional wells in 2011 are part of the North Roosevelt Blvd construction timing plan which began in mid- 2012. That project is planned to last 2years with an expected completion date in July 2014. A Stormwater Master Plan to reassess future direction was completed in early 2011

by CH2M Hill. This plan created a GIS database identifying all stormwater drains and pump locations. This data forms the basis for stormwater modeling and has indicated changes in the number of previously planned injection wells due to elevation considerations made clear through this modeling. Current strategy has focused on retrofitting outfalls with pollution control devices and 200 trash guards have been installed on drains by October 2011 utilizing FEMA funding.

**Vision 2020 Goal 11: We will have a viable seafood industry.**

At its zenith in 1995-1996 when Key West had landed over 23 million pounds each year valued at over \$62 million dollars, Key West was ranked as high as 4<sup>th</sup> in dollar production among US fisheries. The size of the catch has decreased since that time. Nonetheless, Key West still ranked 5<sup>th</sup> as a commercial fishing port by dollars landed (\$54.4 million dollars) in 2006 but slipped to 16<sup>th</sup> position in 2008 landing a catch valued at \$38.7 million dollars (heavily influenced by a poor harvest of Key West Pinks). Our catch is heavily weighted by the mix of shellfish harvested. By dollar volume, Key West fell to #25 in rank with a catch valued at \$43 million dollars for 2012. This year's dollar volume is comparable to the figures of 2006 and 1996. By pounds landed, Key West has slipped to the 58<sup>th</sup> (by volume) ranked port nationally. Relative to other ports, Key West is historically harvesting a lower volume of fish, but the price per pound is much higher, thus ensuring a consistent income. The overall average price for all Key West Landings for 2012 was \$3.64 per pound. By contrast, the value of all U.S. Fisheries Landings was 5.12 billion dollars in 2012 with an average price of \$0.53 per pound!<sup>6</sup>

The industry has been heavily regulated, a factor that has forced consolidation so that over the past 20 years, the fleet has shrunk from 2,000 to 250 boats. Much of the former fleet was comprised of part-time fishermen who no longer found the permitting, licensing and mandated equipment costs economical and were, moreover, adverse to what they perceived as arduous reporting requirements. The consolidation has resulted in fewer, but generally stronger, fishermen. This trend is projected to continue, by at least some in the industry, as competition from unregulated foreign fisheries and increased domestic regulation continue to squeeze the local fishermen. During 2010 that regulatory muscle was felt when the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council voted to close Florida Keys waters to shallow water fishing for grouper, in order to protect the stocks of Gag grouper which are caught in minimal numbers in these waters.

Currently, a study panel of the Keys Sanctuary Advisory Panel, the Ecosystem and Habitat Protection Working Group, has drafted recommendations to add six no-take areas, including an area including Sand Key, Eastern and Western Dry Rocks, and Rock Key off Key West. If enacted, the new regulations are expected to come into effect in mid-2015.

The Key West Chamber strongly protested that ban and will continue to act whenever required to further this goal of a viable seafood industry.

Long Stock II LLC has recently completed Phase One of "Stock Island Marina Village." Plans call for 30 percent, of the approximately 34-acre property, would be dedicated to a working waterfront. New concrete floating docks have been installed adding 128 wet slips and bringing the facility's total to 210 wet slips, 82 of which are designated for resident liveaboards. Plans are

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<sup>6</sup> Mr. Michael Lewis, Fishery Biologist, NOAA.

underway for an 80-room hotel, restaurant, and fish camp to be located on site. The marina can accommodate vessels up to 300 feet in length and 16-foot of draft. Their goal is to attract commercial fishermen to the cooperative fishhouse and market, which currently include lobster and stone crab boats, a shrimp boat and over a dozen other fishing boats with additional vessels being added. The ideas is to also incorporate other Stock Island nautical industry; such as shipwrights, canvas fabricators, carpenters and other tradesmen. The owners stated goal is to “preserve the working waterfront.” The idea is to have a mixed community of residents, working waterfront and transient visitors, with the prices being competitive and sustainable.

**Vision 2020 Goal 12: The cost of government will be effectively managed to produce a greater value for taxes and fees paid. Annual budget increases for the past 20 years (referring to the period 1999 thru 2020) on the same services provided in 1999 will have been less than inflation. The percentage of local government income from property taxes will have declined.**

It is difficult to objectively measure the “value” delivered by government. However, this year it appears this goal may be being met.

### **Key West**

Respecting *budget control* as reflected in taxes levied, the City of Key West had, in years prior to 2006, often reduced millage rates to achieve roll-back rates so that the rising tide of property values was moderated as they affected ad valorem taxes. That changed in 2006 and brought city ad valorem taxes from the \$12 million level to a \$15 million level. In absolute dollar terms, 1999-2000 property taxes levied were \$10.2 million, 2004-05 levies were \$12.2 million (a 3.7% annual increase over the 1999-2000 fiscal year), and 2012-13 budget levies are \$14.2 million (a 0.4% *decrease* from last year, but only a 1.9% annual increase over the 2004-05 fiscal year). Inflation adjusted, the 2004-05 levies should have been \$11.2 million and the 2011-12 budget levies should have been \$14.3 million. If there are no more services delivered now than there were in 2000, this would indicate the goal to provide services at a cost less than inflation is very close to having been met since current year property taxes are \$14, 163,000 compared with an inflation-adjusted \$14,267,000. The \$104,000 difference (or 1%) is favorable and minor compared with differences in prior years.

Moreover, in 2000 (fiscal year ended 9/30/00) property taxes represented 34.1% of general fund revenues. That figure is 27.8% for the 2012-13 fiscal year budget. Therefore the goal, that the percentage of reliance on property taxes as a revenue source will have declined, is currently being met by the City. It does remain a fact that government wage levels, paid-time-off, health benefits, and pension benefits far outstrip those in similar positions in the private sector, and constant vigilance is needed to narrow that gap. The City’s wage levels, however, appear to be less problematic than other governmental agencies.

### **Monroe County**

In absolute dollar terms, 1999-2000 property taxes levied by the County were \$56 million, 2004-05 levies were \$70.5 million (a 4.7% annual increase over the 1999-2000 fiscal year), and 2012-13 budget levies are \$74.7 million (only a 0.7% annual increase over the 2004-05 fiscal year). Inflation adjusted, the 2004-05 levies should have been \$63.8 million and the 2012-13 budget

levies should have been \$80.8 million. If there are no fewer services delivered now than there were in 2000, this would indicate the goal to provide services at a cost less than inflation is now being met; since current year property taxes are \$6.1 million less than the inflation-adjusted \$80.8 million.

**Vision 2020 Goal 13: Opportunities for and the quality of life for Key West's youth will have been improved.**

There are year-round sports and activities for Key West youth both through the schools and through youth organizations such as AYSO, the Boys and Girls Club and the Police Athletic League (PAL) and the like. These organizations provide youth baseball, softball, football, soccer, hockey, basketball, boxing and wrestling leagues. Recently, a new roof, floor and lights for the outdoor roller hockey rink at Atlantic Blvd and Bertha Street were installed. In 2001, renovations were completed on the Fredrick Douglas Community Center Gym, home to the PAL. PAL programs include a basketball league, cheerleading, Police Explorers, a recreation room, roller hockey, a computer lab, a learning center, arts & crafts, and wrestling.

Numerous other arts and cultural activities exist such as the Keys Kids Theater. The Florida Keys Council of the Arts hosts children's arts programs to introduce children to arts and artists, including the Artists in Schools program.

In 1996, the Take Stock in Children program was relatively new to the Keys. In June 2013, fifty-two seniors from the three Monroe County High Schools joined others from the eleven previous graduating classes bringing the total to 438 children's lives have been enriched by the program and who may not otherwise have attended college. These students had signed scholarship contracts requiring them to attend school regularly, maintain grades, follow a code of conduct, meet with mentors weekly and remain crime and drug-free. Local charities donate toward Take Stock in Children scholarships which are "double-matched" by a group of Monroe County Leadership Donors and by The State of Florida. With these scholarship matches from the local organizations and the State of Florida, disadvantaged Key West students can receive four full years of college education.

JUST 4 KIDS serves all children in hardship situations, county-wide and year-round, by providing them with tangible items such as new clothing, school supplies and hygiene products as well as items for special events such as homecoming, prom and graduation. JUST 4 KIDS also opened a Community Art Center in the Bahama Village which offers free art classes to all children and aims to release children's creativity through a variety of media.

Additionally, educational/recreational summer programs are available at a fee from private organizations such as the Mel Fisher Museum. The Monroe County Sheriff's Department maintains an Animal Farm (petting zoo maintained by inmate trustees) open to families every second and fourth Sunday at the Sheriff's College Road facility. The Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center provides interactive exhibits depicting the biodiversity of the Florida Keys and focuses on habitat and human interaction with those habitats. This is typified by the Mote Marine Laboratory Living Reef exhibit which includes a 2,500-gallon reef tank with living corals and tropical fish, a live Reef Cam and other displays that highlight the coral reef environment.

Capital projects within Key West for 2012 that benefit local youths include a \$1.1 million renovation of Nelson English and Willie Ward parks, and the planned \$1.6 million renovation of the Frederick Douglass Gym.

One point of concern during 2013 was an effort to move the city away from funding non-profits organizations, including the Boys & Girls Club, an organization that provides summer camp and after-school programs for lower-income families in Key West. This program was deemed important enough to restore full funding (\$25,000) after impassioned pleas from community members and commissioners, but future funding remains uncertain for this organization committed to youth quality of life.

**Vision 2020 Goal 14: Relationships will have improved between local government and the citizens in support of the KEY WEST VISION 2020.**

There is a more amicable atmosphere in the city among political interests than there was a few years ago. There is an open communication and improved access to our government leaders, our Mayor and Commissioners and management within the City, County and the Key West Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber of Commerce has been integrally involved with shaping the future of the city via the appointment of the Executive Vice President to two city committees in the past year. Appointments to the City Charter Review and Redistricting Committee (Chairperson) and the City Manager Selection Committee have allowed the Chamber of Commerce to be actively involved in these important processes that will shape the future of Key West for many years to come.

In September 2013, Executive Vice President Virginia Panico travelled to a cruise ship convention in Cartagena, Columbia at the request of Commissioner Rossi and the Key West City Manager. Also, on behalf of County Administrator Roman Gastesi, she was appointed to the County's Compensation and Benefits Committee to select a firm to evaluate the county's wages and benefits to other governments and private entities. As of November 2013 she was again requested to join the review committee. Ms. Panico is the only non-government appointee.

The Vision 2020 Plan went through an extensive community review before its release in the year 1998. This document has been revised yearly throughout its 15 years.