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Southeastern channel airs growth documentary

Ten years in one day. According to regional economists that's how far and fast Hurricane Katrina propelled North Shore growth and economic development on Aug. 29,

2005.

For developer **Jim Maurin**, chairman of **Stirling Properties**, the time warp caused by supercharged post-Katrina growth boils down to a simple statistic for Tangipahoa Parish.

“Since the storm, over 6,000 new building lots have been developed,” **Maurin** said. “And another 7,000 lots have been permitted. You're talking about a market before the storm in which we would do 600 or 700 homes a year.”

**Maurin** and other prominent North Shore businessmen and officials share their insights about the growth and resulting challenges in “Ten Years in One Day,” a one-hour “Northshore Business” special produced by the Southeastern Channel.

Beginning July 23, the news documentary will air on Mondays at 7 p.m. and on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. on Southeastern Louisiana University's educational access channel on Charter cable channel 18.

The program was underwritten by Parish National Bank.

“Ten Years in One Day” features interviews with more than 40 state, parish and local officials and economists, consultants, developers, realtors, homebuilders, and attorneys from North Shore parishes.

“It was our goal to cover the growth situation from all angles and provide a comprehensive, accurate and informative program on the true state of the north shore economy,” said Rick Settoon, Southeastern Channel general manager and the show's executive producer.

“I believe we've done that as well as uncover some of the huge challenges now facing North Shore communities because of this growth,” Settoon said. “In that sense, this show offers a critical perspective and tool which voters can use to determine the future direction of their communities.”

“Ten Years in One Day” looks at the rapid rise of North Shore population post-Katrina, especially in Tangipahoa and St. Tammany parishes, and the new dynamic which has accompanied that growth - from the jump in sales tax revenues to the flurry of economic development with the influx of new businesses.

Other growth-related issues explored are the need for school facilities to keep up with the expanding population and the current workforce shortage with the increasing number of available jobs in the region.

The show looks at the post-Katrina boom in the real estate and construction industries and the spikes that have occurred in both residential and commercial construction. Local hotbeds of residential building are identified.

The program examines the skyrocketing prices of new homes, the affordability of these homes for the North Shore population, and factors such as insurance costs and the Louisiana Road Home program.

In addition, “Ten Years in One Day” describes infrastructure, planning and zoning challenges brought about by the increased growth, including the impact of Gulf Opportunity Zone legislation and new opportunities for regional developers.

Settoon and veteran broadcast journalist Steve Bellas, an instructor in Southeastern's communication department, produced the show.

Bellas, who hosts the Southeastern Channel's public affairs roundtable, “Northshore Focus,” also wrote, hosted and narrated “Ten Years in One Day.”

Bill Joubert, director of the Southeast Louisiana Business Center, provided additional research and consulting. Southeastern Channel staff members Jamie Bass, Steve Kleye and Claude Levet videotaped the show, which was edited by Josh Kapusinski.

“Our future is staring us in the face, and it's happened a lot sooner than anyone could have predicted,” Bellas said. “Sometimes, we humans do miss the painfully obvious, but not in this case. And it's up to those with fortitude to take advantage of opportunities opened up on the North Shore.

“Those who moved here from the South Shore and those who have long been here hopefully will take comfort that the panic home buying is long over, and that more normal economic trends will settle in, if all those expected businesses for the parishes do indeed come in.” Bellas said. “That means jobs, and it also means a new lease on education and training for those jobs.

“The trick is will folks recognize the opportunities and jump on them in order to create even more opportunity?”

The program also can be seen online at [www.selu.edu/tv](http://www.selu.edu/tv).