

Editorial from the Op-Ed, Daily Press, Nov. 22, 2009,
by Councilman Herbert H. Bateman, Jr.

Dear Editor,

I felt it appropriate to convey to the citizens of Newport News what my focus will be since the change in leadership at the City Manager level. It is my intention to keep the City focused on the items below. Our acting City Manager has been receptive to these initiatives. I will also continue to work with other council members to promote consensus and move Newport News forward.

- **PRIMARY VISION – MAKE NEWPORT NEWS A DYNAMIC COMMUNITY WHERE FAMILIES WANT TO LIVE, WORK AND RAISE A FAMILY**
- **Ensure that Newport News City employee base is encouraged to stay focused on their jobs in view of the most recent changes in leadership.**
- **In anticipation of another year where revenues decline due to the poor economy and the reduction of value in real estate – we should move quickly to evaluate further expense reductions by asking department managers to find 5%,10% and 15% across the board reductions in departmental budgets.**
- **Encouraging economic diversity by making Newport News an attractive place for employment opportunities. Focus on development and redevelopment in all parts of the City. Focus on environmentally clean employment opportunities.**
- **Assuring our citizens a safe and orderly school system that fosters high academic achievement.**
- **Strengthening public safety and reducing violent crime throughout our city. Emphasis on gang identification, gang suppression, and rigorous prosecutorial efforts by police and Commonwealth Attorney.**
- **Diligent involvement and communication with VDOT regarding the Warwick Blvd. Project and Middleground Boulevard extension project. Push to get road opened and lights calibrated for everyone especially the small businesses along Warwick Boulevard.**
- **Improving the long term financial future of Newport News by keeping and possibly improving our Aa bond rating.**
- **Be responsive to the tax payer.**
- **Continue efforts to reduce debt by negotiating off moral obligations and by using cash capital for purchase capital improvements and equipment.**
- **Deal responsibly with the need to alter the pension and retirement system and develop a realistic plan to fully fund the pension fund based on actuarial recommendations.**