

# **Issues and Positions - A Path to the Future**



**H. CLIFF PAGE, JR.**

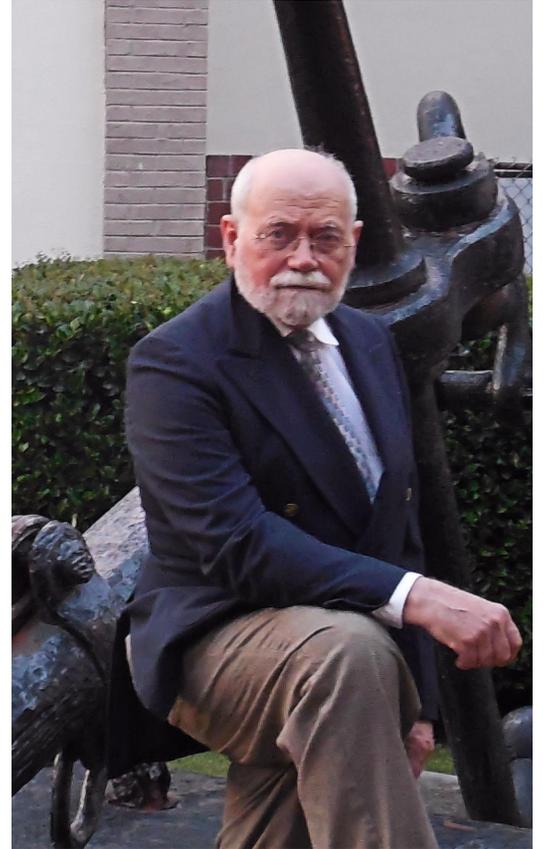
**Candidate for Mayor  
City of Portsmouth, Virginia  
2016**

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## ABOUT

*Cliff Page was born in Charleston, South Carolina, the son of a career Naval Officer. As a young wog, only two years old, he became a shell-back in a fierce gale crossing the Equator aboard a Navy transport carrying his family to Panama. The salt spray of the ocean and the white foam of a swallowing wake would permeate his memory and his love of the sea, while the sounds of Latin voices and music would soon resonate in his ears and later he would become versed in both Spanish and Italian. He spent his youth living in Naval seaports on our nations eastern and western shores.*



*While his father was first stationed at the NNSY, he attended Simonsdale Elementary and Cradock Jr. High School and in the 7th grade he wrote his first term paper on the history of our Shipyard, using original 19th century historical volumes from the shipyard library for his research. Living in the Shipyard, he supplemented his meager allowance picking up pop bottles along the waterfront and dry-docks and selling newspapers to sailors and shipyard workers aboard ships and on the piers. He graduated from High School in Naples, Italy, and traveled in Europe extensively. While living in San Francisco in 1968, following the Tet Offensive, he was drafted into the US Army. He was trained in combat*



arms and then as a radio mechanic and electronics technician for a year. He volunteered for assignment in Vietnam. There he served with the 34th Engineering Btn., 128th Brg., which was building QL 13, the highway connecting Ben Hoa to Parrots Beak on the Cambodian border, at the foot of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. With the Engineers he served as his company's Communication Chief, managing all their commo, electronic and mine sweeping equipment, and supervising two switchboards and the radio operators. He was awarded the Army Commendation for his performance.

In 1970, Cliff returned stateside and entered Old Dominion University. His earliest studies were in political science and international relations. At ODU he organized a five-man team and developed an analytic survey concerning role perception and effectiveness of all the Mayors and Council members in the Hampton Roads Cities. All the team members became so jaded by the shallowness of the majority of the politicians they interviewed that they overwhelmingly turned their backs on politics to take up careers as writers, musicians, or in Cliff's case - artist and sculptor. While they all decided to follow more personally challenging but leaner and more precarious pursuits, their professor would use the findings of this analytic and empirical study as the nexus of his PHD dissertation. Yet, Cliff worked for the Old Dominion University Research Foundation and has continued to be engaged in political activities, but not as a career path. He has been actively involved in political affairs at various levels and in civic participation throughout his adult life. He was nominated to be one of the City's Electors. While living



in Norfolk and Portsmouth, Cliff was called upon to sit on advisory committees regarding the formation of the d'Art Center in Norfolk and in locating a gallery and work space for the Tidewater Artist Association and the Governor's Magnet School. The germ of his vision to revitalize the uptown section of Granby street with young art and dance students, would later take hold in a different but dynamic way, when TCC opened its Downtown Norfolk Campus there, which accomplished his ideas in spades.

Cliff's artistic talents were recognized early on by his grammar school teachers, but he only attended one high school art class. His knowledge and skills in the arts were early on achieved auto-didactically, and by working under private tutors who thought him to paint in oil beginning when he was thirteen, and by visiting the great art museums of the world. At Old Dominion University he was awarded a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in four rather than five years and also studied at Norfolk State. He then went on to take graduate courses in Mexico and received his Masters of Fine Arts from East Carolina University in Greenville in two years rather than three (with a 3.75 GPA). In Mexico he studied at the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes and had solo and group exhibitions in various cities there. In the city of Delores Hidalgo he showed his work with Jose Louis Cuevas, Mexico's leading painter. The President of Mexico visited that exhibition. At East Carolina University he organized the students of the Gray School of Art into the Visual Arts Forum, which became the largest student visual arts organization in the country. He was elected to be its first President. At the time, East Carolina had the



second largest student funds of any university in the country, right behind UCLA. Until Cliff fought for funding for the School of Arts, they had never received a dime. By the time he graduated they were sharing the largest portion of the budget with the well-established and renowned Music School. He became the only student, ever elected by the faculty, to serve on the Dean's Advisory Committee. He was the Chair of the Visual Arts Forum's Budget Committee for two years. As the Chairman of the Symposium Committee, for two years, he organized and managed two semester long art events each year, of regional and national importance, offering visiting artist workshops, film presentations, visiting lecturers by critics and authors and artists, and sending students to professional conferences as far away as Toronto. He also saw that student funds were allocated to the support of the school's art exhibitions in its new but unfunded gallery, and the purchase of new books for its new art library. At the same time, he was tight with his budget request and demanded strict accountability for appropriated funds and tolerated no waste and was scrupulous in finding the best "bang for the buck".

In the summer of 1977 Cliff Page was the Sculptor in Residence at Portsmouth's Art Center where he spent three months carving a marble sculpture in the open air, next to the Olde Courthouse. In 1979 he returned to Portsmouth and purchased the old Portsmouth Boiler and Iron Works, which he turned into his studio and foundry. It had been vacant and condemned for seven years, until he restored it to life. The neighborhood was red lined by the City, high in crime and suffering from



civic neglect. Cliff worked to clean up the neighborhood, make it safer for everyone in the uptown district and for Ida Barbour, the surrounding small businesses and residents and saw that the criminals that trolled its streets got their just rewards. He organized a neighborhood petition to the Council for sidewalks (something promised, but still thirty-five years later undelivered), worked with the City Engineers to change out all the street lamps to high crime sodium vapor bulbs and strategically add street light poles, and correct the flooding of the streets in the Uptown Business District. He fought to see that the Health Department, Environmental Inspections and PRHA cleaned up the neighborhood and started doing their job. Nothing came easy, as criminality and public neglect were institutionalized acceptable behavior. Blight was the public and private norm. Cliff still owns and operates his studio and also purchased the old National Printers building on High Street in the same block. He spent ten years restoring that building, which was one of the three finest pieces turn-of-century commercial architecture in the uptown.

In 1980 Cliff Page was awarded a Fulbright-Hays Fellowship to Milan, where he worked in the studios of Italy's most famous living sculptor and perfected the mastery of his preferred artistic medium - bronze. He worked in the Norfolk Naval Shipyard in both the Foundry and the Pattern Shops and ran the Navy's wood shop at NOB and built foundries and did lost wax casting in both Mexico, Virginia and North Carolina. But in Europe he worked alongside some of the greatest art foundry masters in Italy, but also honed his skills there in a precision casting artisan



foundry. On his return to Portsmouth he designed and cast the 30 sculpture Awards for Portsmouth's first Notables presentation. For two summers Cliff worked with Portsmouth High School students in his studio and at Manor High School as part of the City's "Able and Ambitious - Gifted and Talented Program", he has also worked with a number of interns in his studio that were referred to him from Norfolk, Portsmouth or the Virginia Beach Schools and also with college students. He has taught students, in various subjects, at every age level from Montessori and K-1 to University level. He has been a juror of City, regional and state wide art competitions and gallery group shows.

Cliff was instrumental in bringing to Mayor Holley the City's need for a Percentage for the Arts and on his suggestion an ad hoc committee was formed and money was appropriated for the sculpture in front of Willet Hall and a mural in the Social Services Building. Unfortunately, the purpose of the Committee to create a long standing Percentage for the Arts Fund supporting public art and artists failed, and the City still has no long term plan regarding maintenance of its public monuments or art. Nor does it have any strategic plan to acquire or place public art in the City for its beautification as part of any kind of urban master plan.

Cliff served as a Charter member of the D-1 Downtown Design Review Committee for five years and also has participated in every Design Consultancy that has been brought into the City concerning the Downtown. At the same time, he has also followed the developments and conditions of other areas in the City.



When no one was even contemplating light rail, high speed trains, street cars or trolleys and the regional communities were starting to adopt motorized bus-trolleys in Hampton Roads and in Richmond, Cliff Page, in the early eighties, was promoting all of these intra-modal means of transportation and urging early adoption. He spoke out against the second Midtown Tunnel beginning in the late eighties and promoted the third crossing as a very needed regional transportation and intra-modal maritime trade solution. He still urges the adoption of these means of transportation and strongly supports a high speed train central terminal in Portsmouth.

In 1985 Cliff Page was appointed to the Faculty of Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey, which at the time was that nation's most elite and prestigious school of higher education. The following year he was a finalist for a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar position and a first alternate for an Indo-American Research Scholarship to the National Institute of Design in Delhi. He was offered the sculptor position in the School of Art at Carnegie Mellon University, but turned it down to return to his studio in Portsmouth. In the late 90's he began studying at the Portsmouth campus of TCC, learning Engineering, Architectural and Electronic Drafting, AutoCAD and various 3D Modeling programs. He taught Drafting, Architecture, AutoCAD and other subjects as a member of the TCC VA Beach faculty. Cliff strongly believes in inquisitiveness, learning, study and above all academic and educational challenge and initiative. He has completed post graduate courses in Economics, Business



Management, Marketing Management, Marketing, Sales Management and various other studies.

With the events of 9-11, and being too old to re-up with the military, his desire to serve his country once again, and the lore of the sea, drew him into the Merchant Marine. Between shipping out on large vessels and delivering or crewing sail boats he has crossed the Atlantic, sailed in the Mediterranean, Sea of Siam, Gulf of Mexico and all over the Pacific. His last adventure left him shipwrecked and pirated in the Sea of Campeche, in which he got out of Mexico with the shirt on his back, his life and enough memories to write a sea story.

Cliff understands the needs of merchant mariners and ocean shipping as well as what it takes to attract and entice sailors and ships to Portsmouth. As a Merchant Mariner, he was trained in shipboard firefighting and therefore has a strong affinity and understanding respecting our City's firefighters. Having held high level government security clearances and positions of classified responsibility and dealt with the City's Police and Court systems for four decades, he understands discretion, public responsibility and the limitations and constraints of government authority and justice.

In 2015, Cliff was the Artist in Residence at the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish, New Hampshire. While there he created a Commemorative plaque honoring the 150th Anniversary of the death of Abraham Lincoln and the 50th Anniversary of the Saint-Gaudens Site



as the first NPS honoring an American artist. It is still the only Federal site in the Department of Interior dedicated to an American sculptor. Saint-Gaudens NHS is the only sculptor in residency in the NPS.

Cliff Page has been all over the world, knows other cultures, speaks other languages, has seen how other people live - both the super-rich and powerful and the very poor and destitute. He has witnessed corruption, tyranny, war and destitution, opulent wealth and grand beauty. He has lived in some of the most metropolitan and cultivated cities on this globe, places most folks only dream of visiting and he has also slept in a bunker and under the stars and in a berth on tossing seas. But, he has always returned to Portsmouth. He has watched this city change over a forty-year period. He has studied its historical urban development and knows its future plans. He knows the back alleys of Naples and the boulevards of Milan and the hills of San Francisco, Rome and Istanbul, as well as the neighborhoods of Portsmouth. But, it is Portsmouth, where for most of his life he has rested his head at night. Cliff Page knows Portsmouth, its history, its people, the factors that make up its economy and the things that can bring it back to its once held position of vital importance and industry in Hampton Roads and in Virginia.

Cliff Page believes that the necessary leadership to bring about the changes that we must make as a City, to put us back on course, takes a progressive visionary mind not a bean counter, nor a back slapper, not a get-along-go-along jolly self-promoter, or anyone with an external agenda, nor should it be anyone who has not been involved with our



community for a very long time. Our Mayor at this juncture in our history should not be a government insider, but rather an outsider, with a broad fresh perspective, but with an insider's knowledge, capable of leading. Cliff Page believes that a mayor must plot the course and set it, but that the wheel that maintains our bearing must be in the hands of a trusted manager, the helmsman, who keeps us on the designated course, to protect us from foundering. He believes that while a manager's staff acts as specialized watch-standers on our voyage, dedicated to keeping us safe and out of peril, our common citizens are like a well-seasoned crew who should be always vigilant to any peril and mindful of the survival of us all. The warning voices of the people are like a loyal crew whose backs drive the vessel forward, whose ideas and dissensions should be heard and addressed, to assure that nothing is left overturned in determining the safest, most prudent and most profitable course that will benefit all of our citizens in this representative democracy. Portsmouth needs unity, direction, purpose and a more responsive and engaging form of government that will permit us to have a better, easier and more profitable life as we travel on our journey to the opposite shore. Moreover, at this juncture in our history we need visionary leadership and change!

## **OVERVIEW**

This document contains a compilation of beliefs and positions that I feel are needed, or can make meaningful changes and bring about a positive future for the City of Portsmouth. These thoughts are not comprehensive. Nothing is ever truly substantively complete. Nor can anyone expect that all things come to pass - at least in one's own life time. We are all tempered by the opposing forces of



reality.

None-the-less, I do not believe that running for any office requiring leadership in a democracy should be made without laying out for the people, what you stand for and what ideas you have considered for change. There is a public responsibility to the citizens to express a platform. At least then, if elected the individual can claim a mandate for change - if he is accepted at the polls as the people's champion. Even if he cannot achieve his positions, he can say this is what the people want. No one should vote for a candidate because of shallow motivations, although it is no doubt the norm. Nor should anyone vote because like sheep they follow the path of their neighbor... That path may lead to the slaughter house.

Today in an age of fifteen second sound bites and polarizing tabloid media coverage, we are seldom given anything more than a raw bone to chew on, and like ravaged dogs our people fight over that worn out frame, and yet there is no sustenance in the choices we are given. Today in this nation, times are too perilous, at all levels in this democratic experiment which we call America. But it is at the local level where we can affect the most change for the value of our vote - and as it should be. If there is a revolution in democracy, then let it be in our neighborhoods in which we walk every day and we call home, for this is the most salient and palpable expression of our existence. If we want to change the world... Then we must do it from our own front porch.

No man can agree with everything another man proposes or says... That is why we have a representative democracy. But if another man's proposals make common sense and are analytic and well thought out and exhibit progressive thinking, then another man can say, I disagree with this or that, but I am sure that if I put my faith in another man's ideas, which I hold true to my own and am in general agreement, and trust his integrity to do as he says and say what he will do - then the test of confidence has been satisfied.

A democracy, to survive, must be ruled by the Apulian Creed - All things in moderation. That is the decorum that guides civility and opens its door to diversity of opinion, new ideas and challenges but likewise, is willing to compromise on subtleties to achieve overall stability and progress. But a democracy is also a periodic revolution that mobilizes a people when instability threatens the ship of state, which can bring it back to equilibrium and set its course true and fair and save it from foundering. Today, Portsmouth has drifted way off course because of poor management and leadership and we must make radical course changes to set our prow in the right direction.

Whenever such corrections are made there will always be over steering and under steering to find the true course and stop the helm from swinging wildly, but it can be done. It must be done. For today, as a City and as a community, we are headed for the rocks.

## **ROAD TO CHANGE**



## **EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT:**

The current “at-large” form of city government is ineffectual and unaccountable and creates an “us” and “them” relationship between the Citizens and the Council in which no Councilman is held responsible for anything and the Citizens who petition the Council are being disrespected and marginalized. An antagonistic atmosphere prevails whenever there is a meeting of the people and the Council. The matter of Citizen participation should not be confined by the ability to address the Council for 7 or 5 or 3 minutes.

I call for a reconstitution of the City into racially, economically and socially diverse neighborhood Wards to bring together our people into smaller constituencies where elected Wards men can be held accountable for neighborhood concerns and issues. I propose that the City Council be expanded to have three members elected at large and five members representing Wards and a Mayor elected at-large. This will bring balance, accountability and more effective and responsive democracy to governance and restore the voice of the people.

I recommend that Wards men serve for two year terms, at-large members serve for three year terms and the Mayor serve for a four-year term. The three at large members should stand for election on the same years. This will provide continuity and turnover for Wards men and an organized and systematic means of elections for at large members. This will insure that the will of the people is being upheld and always attended to, in such a manner that the Council never loses sight of who they represent. Because of the math of odd and even years, infrequent conjunctions will occur when both at-large and Wards men will all be standing for elections at the same time and also on even rarer occasions the Mayor will be standing for election at the same time as all. This very interesting occurrence will make for a vital and revolutionary change in leadership which will benefit the people, and be regulated by outside celestial forces, creating an election process that will strengthen democracy and guarantee change.

Citizens should address their concerns in writing directly to their Wards men or at-large members who will consult with other constituents and present such concerns to the Council for deliberation and action as needed. Council members should call on Citizens to testify or give witness before the Council and be cross examined for their testimony given individually or collectively as representatives of organizations. Citizens and other parties should be permitted by request to make formal presentations to the Council. Wards men should periodically meet with their Wards in public places to take and review requests of Council, address neighborhood concerns, encourage public engagement and involvement in the democratic process and listen to the people who elected them. Those meetings should in most instances be held within the Wards where practicable. The Wards should be authorized to set up Committees of Necessity or Action to address matters of interest to that Ward or to develop testimony or presentations to the Council.

The City Council should hold all meetings in public in the main chamber and not in restricted work sessions. Only for matters proscribed by law should the Council meet in closed session. Council should not meet for retreats or for any other obfuscating excuse to circumvent the State law.

No Councilman should be the Chairman of any Public Committee. No Managerial Head of Staff should sit on a Public Committee except on the periphery and should be there for necessary consultation and to give reports to the Committee. Only staff performing Secretarial duties should ever sit at the



table alongside appointed or elected officials. PRHA should not sit on any Committee.

The Council should concentrate its oversight to a Visionary and Directional scope and on Citizen concerns. It should establish set priorities to guide the Manager.

The Manager in addressing concerns to the Council and in presenting budgets, should be prepared with alternatives so that the Council does not undermine his professional responsibilities with micro-management but can make quick rational decisions with minimal dissension and conflict.

Managerial Department heads and the School Superintendent should be held accountable for appropriated funds, and financial improprieties and accounting irregularities should be considered grounds for termination and breach of contract.

Councilman, Staff Officials, the City Manager, State Legislators, the Mayor and PRHA should not sit on any of the boards or be a member of any non-governmental economic focused organizations such as the Portsmouth Partners, Greater Portsmouth Development Corporation, or the Chamber of Commerce, even as honorary members, but should provide such organizations the courtesy of attending meetings as City officials invited to speak publicly or as observers only. Likewise delegates of such organizations should be invited and entertained by officials in the offices of the government official in respect to their professional capacities. PRHA and the City should divest themselves from the Greater Portsmouth Development Corporation. GPDC should bid, compete and promote its agenda like any other non-profit or business wanting to acquire land or property in the City and it should be independent and above board. Activities behind closed doors that involve public property and government grants or funding should be as transparent as possible and not give the impression of collusion, bid rigging, favoritism or illegality no matter how well intention, fair minded and honest the parties may be.

#### FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Firemen should be given a small annual bonus if they reside in Portsmouth. Firemen should have their salaries affixed to an annual cost of living increase so that they don't find their earnings eaten away by inflation. The Fire Department should be encouraged to be prudent in their budgeting and spending, but also have on hand adequate surplus supplies to meet unexpected major catastrophic needs. Equipment should be maintained and be in working order and in readiness at all times. Fire equipment should not be cannibalized except for strategic emergency situations and to maintain readiness and only carried out if replacement parts are on order and awaiting delivery. The Fire Department and the Health Department should work together with the schools to encourage fire prevention and fire safety, anti-litter, environmental protection, street safety and neighborhood cleanliness in the community. An Auxiliary Fire Department force of retired Firemen should be organized who have knowledge and desire to promote community values and safety, who have an ability to effectively communicate to schools and organizations, which can allow the City to keep its budget down, while providing rewarding opportunities of public engagement with those veterans. Firemen, Policemen and other public servants outreaching and speaking to schools and civic organizations can serve as a tremendous avenue for public engagement, relationship bonding, civic stewardship and an increased awareness of safety in the community. This kind of public connection with the Citizenry can build community values while reducing risks and calamity. A Fire Auxiliary and other public officials meeting with students at the High School level in particular, can also serve as a positive public model that would aid in professional



recruitment to the next generation. By teaching fire safety and proper response to students, the Fire Department can create a pro-active rather than a reactive community. By meeting with students early in their careers and throughout their High School education, students can become aware of those public professions and might aspire to such an honored career upon graduation.

## **POLICE:**

The City should consider creating a Regional Police Academy in which police recruits could live in barracks, train in law, procedures, weapons and tactics. Instructors and students could be drawn from all the neighboring communities and nationally. The Portsmouth TCC should be used for certain academic courses. The facility should have an indoor shooting range that could be used by the regional Police Departments and where gun safety could also be taught to Citizens in affiliation with the NRA. A ball court should be available for sports to encourage teamwork and for relaxation of trainees, and for indoor ceremonies. A swimming pool should be available for use by the trainees and for the police. BBQ pits should be built and trees planted to create a park like campus environment where trainees and police officers and their families and fire fighters could relax and build camaraderie with their families, co-workers and students. Law enforcement could mentor neighborhood youth and youth groups at the facilities to build liaisons and present positive role model relationships for our upcoming citizens and encourage public service careers in policing. Graduating recruits should be interned as partners with active PPD Officers, who would serve as mentors, as part of their training. The facility should hold Law enforcement symposiums and training at the regional and State level to encourage commonalities, co-operation, uniformity and problem solving among the various South-side Hampton Roads Police Departments. Currently, Portsmouth is having to send its recruit trainees to Newport News, which is inconvenient but also very costly. If Portsmouth opens a police training academy and only takes students from the South-side and lets Newport News concentrate on the cities and towns north and to the West of the James, the region would be better served and we could both benefit financially. Portsmouth could save training and transportation costs, but it also would be more efficient and less costly to our sister Cities. The “Pines” property recently acquired by the City should be looked at for consideration of suitability for this project.

The City should have an indoor shooting range that could be used by the regional Police Departments and where gun safety could also be taught to Citizens in affiliation with the NRA. This range could be privately or publicly owned or managed.

Foot Patrols should be encouraged in the Downtown in conjunction with NEAT patrols. Greater use of our Auxiliary Police should be made to minimize labor costs, maximize effectiveness and engage the Citizens with skills and commitment to improve neighborhood safety.

Cameras should be placed at strategic dangerous intersections and high crime locations to prevent crime, record accidents, reduce violations, identify and apprehend suspects, minimize personnel costs and protect our Citizens and businesses.

Police and Economic Development should work to encourage and strategically plan for neighborhood usage of local EDG Safety & Security Grants by businesses and promote interlocking directional use of cameras and neighboring equipment, to maximize targeted danger zones of potential or known crime locations, in a proactive uniform manner, encouraging uniform tactical strategies, equipment, scope of



coverage and technical standardization.

Police should provide all Citizens with a standardized physical Receipt and Report Number for all criminal incidences made. All evidence taken, held or released to a crime victim should be accounted for by receipt and photographic documentation made at the time of discovery, or logged receipt by the police, and at the time of release to the owner or victim. Any release of evidence and property should require a signature for transfer, particularly in situations where the property is not directly held by the police.

Police should be directed to issue written formal recorded warnings for violations of minor infractions to encourage public accountability, personal responsibility, opportunity for remedy and reform by Citizens and for better police-community relations. Police should, in particular use their discretion where it involves tourists, out of state residents, transient military or like situations in which the parties may not be familiar to our rules and regulations or not be aware of their violations and may be accustomed to different standards. Such warnings should be noted for the record, in court if a future citation is made for the same violation within one year.

Additional personnel should be added to the Crime Scene Analysis and Forensics Section of the Police Department.

The Detective Bureau should be strengthened with added personnel.

#### **PUBLIC SAFETY & LAW ENFORCEMENT:**

Police should be directed to crack down on illegal gambling and prostitution on our streets. The attraction of prostitution in and around our City's ports in particular should be deterred. Prostitution is not a victim-less crime, but is a scourge upon a community that spreads disease, which carries with it physical crimes of abuse and drug use, slavery and moreover is disgraceful and demeaning to women and young girls. The police in conjunction with Social Services, the Courts and non-profit organizations should use a carrot and stick approach to get women off the streets, break their addictive habits, and encourage meaningful opportunities for employment and improvements to their social condition.

Traffic Engineering should continue to change out mercury vapor lamps with sodium vapor street lights and improve lighting in dangerous neighborhoods and high crime areas. The City should keep its eyes open for the right opportunity to convert our street lights to LED bulbs when the price and reliability of these new bulbs reaches the right point.

The City should adopt stronger vagrancy and panhandling laws with fines and requirements for mandatory community service for offenders. Littering should be strictly enforced. Particularly where there is plastic involved. Unlawful assembly which inhibits vehicular traffic, pedestrian transit or discourages commerce or creates a public nuisance or endangerment to health and safety should be discouraged by strengthened and effective law and law enforcement, particularly in the business districts and around public housing. Community service should be mandatory for repeat offenders of vagrancy and littering laws.



Illegal public consumption of alcohol and public intoxication should be more vigilantly enforced and mandatory increased sanctions required with provisions for community service in lieu of and in conjunction with fines mandated for repeat offenders.

The City should focus serious attention on the eradication of Cocaine, Crack, Methamphetamine, illegal barbiturates, heroin and designer psycho-addictive drugs from the City. These dangerously addictive drugs are extremely habitual and are all associated with violence, high crime and death.

More public bicycle racks should be strategically placed in important locations to encourage bicycle use and prevent theft and for the safety of the public right of way. The police should be diligent in enforcing and requiring bicycle license purchase and warn and ticket individuals for failure to display a license. This will also reduce bicycle thefts and aid in theft recoveries. The Police should be more vigilant and impose fines for misuse of the streets and dangerous use of the streets by a wide range of “other” types of vehicular traffic. (Mopeds, motorized scooters, skateboards, Segways, wheelchairs, etc.) The Council should address the scope and definition of “vehicle” and “pedestrian” as new technologies are confusing the rights and responsibilities of what is permissible and permitted and what are and should be the boundaries and limitations. Bike lanes need to be discussed in this context. Bicycles and mopeds are licensed, but Segways, motorized scooters and skateboards, and wheelchairs are not and yet they are in the streets and sidewalks, most often without lights safety markings, bells or horns and can move at high speeds and are difficult to see by drivers. Boundaries and definitions need to be established for the various new and old kinds of motorized vehicles. Are they motor vehicles subject to the laws of the road; or are their riders to be considered as pedestrians? This matter is becoming a safety issue that needs to be addressed with uniformity proactively to minimize risk, provide safety guidance to the public, and prevent serious injury and property damage.

Portsmouth should independently, or working with the regional Cities, create and implement a model law, that could be adopted by the State and region, that requires scrap yards to gather more information, require two forms of identification from sellers of high value metals, and log photographs of the vehicles transporting such materials, maintain copies of the vehicle registration, photographs and copies of identification of passengers and sellers of scrap, and photographs of the segregated commodities. Scrap yards should be required to hold high value scrap purchased by a yard for a period of sixty days in segregated, isolated and inventoried units before it can be transported or sold, and be required to provide an itemized list and inventory of high value commodities for police review within 24 hours or sooner of all such purchases and sales as a part of their business license and operation. Failure to comply should be grounds for license suspension, revocation and fine. Scrap yards dealing in high value metallic commodities should be required to post a \$100,000 bond as part of their license to do business.

Portsmouth should establish a law prohibiting any licensed Pawn Shop in the City from knowingly employing a police officer currently working for the City, for the purposes of serving as a collection agent for the business, under penalty of forfeiture of license and fine. This would not preclude the police from engaging in any undercover police operation within a licensed Pawn Shop, but would preclude them from doing so outside the requirements of their job as police officers.

The City should pass an ordinance prohibiting any Pawn Shop or the Pawn Shop’s employees, working in the City from engaging in the sale of any item taken in officially or unofficially by a Pawn Shop, from



being sold at a flea market or over the internet that has not been registered, as proscribed by law, and has remained in the store for the period of time prescribed by law. Pawn shops should be prohibited from any purchase or sale of any item, from within their business facilities that is not made for the express purposes of a pawn transaction.

The Police should enforce illegal parking, improper display, and the abandonment of vehicles on alleys and side roads in the City, which is its duty under the State law, in the same manner as it does for right of ways that are owned by the City. The City inspectors should also do the same. The City has failed to uphold such enforcement for at least the last five years.

## **ENVIRONMENT:**

The schools should start a long term campaign to teach anti-littering, and the City should strictly enforce the existing litter code and press for the imposition of mandatory penalties by the Courts for violators with the option of community service related to neighborhood cleanup. The City should enact a law with severe sanctions for the dumping of tires in the City. The City should increase the use of public trash receptacles in strategic locations in the downtown and uptown districts of the City. Every piece of trash that goes into a public barrel is a piece of garbage or plastic that does not clog our storm drains, enter our waterways or blow into our City, creating a blighted environment.

The City should create a tax on bottled water purchases in smaller unit volumes. Portsmouth has some of the best potable water in the nation and we should promote its safety for human consumption and use and discourage the sale of small single drink bottled water in particular, but also bottled soft drinks in single consumption plastic containers, which are environmentally unsound. The City should start a campaign to encourage restaurants and food vendors to reduce plastic in their product packaging of foodstuffs for human consumption. Portsmouth should study the price of the water we sell to other cities to determine if our pricing is inadequate in providing maximized profit or is causing a drain on our water supply.

The City should develop a serpentine central park that would meander through the center of the City. Coordination should be made with the Sheriff's Department to develop a horticultural training, planting and maintenance program for inmates to help upkeep the public grounds, learn a meaningful trade, transform themselves in a good environment with meaningful exercise and avail themselves of an opportunity for worthwhile community service. A large public arboretum and nursery should be built, to grow trees, shrubs and plants for public spaces and for Citywide beautification. Construction of a large greenhouse for the public to visit in the central park should be made which would house a broad variety of plants and flowers. The City should create a staff position for a City Horticulturist. School science, art and music classes should use the public park and green house for field trip activities. The park should be developed as a quiet sylvan landscape of repose and natural environmental beauty to soften the industrial busyness and noise of the urban environment. . The focus of this park should not be on recreational activities, but paths for horseback riding, walking and jogging should be considered along with ponds. A stable for horses (where the Police mounts could be housed along with rental horses) should be built. A petting zoo should be considered for the enjoyment of all and especially children, Parks and Recreation should engage the City's Garden Clubs in their outreach and Garden Club members should be invited to become active participants in the public oversight of the City's parks.



City Planning and Parks and Recreation should have an outreach program to the City's neighborhoods to advise on how to unify and beautify the street-scapes with plants and trees and advise and encourage neighborhood conformity of urban design and landscaping. We should look to Norfolk as a model of this kind of engagement. Shrubs, plants and trees grown by the City should be provided to the neighborhoods as a general policy of Citywide beautification.

All new parking lots in the City should be constructed of "Grass Block Pavers" and existing asphalt or concrete parking lot owners should be given tax incentives to replace in whole or part, their existing lots with this eco-friendly system that will reduce water run-off and minimize radiant summer heat, while offering a more visually friendly and attractive environment.

All large parking lots for new commercial construction of over one acre should be required by City Code to provide covered sidewalks and landscaping with trees to soften the environmental appearance and reduce runoff.

Scott's Creek should be dredged to provide for deep draft small craft to utilize the waterway. Swimming Point should be dredged to increase the size and depth of the mooring basin. The City should work with the Corps of Engineers to make the mooring basin more accessible. The dredging in Scott's Creek in particular should be supported by Federal funds as, much of the silt filling up the Creek is coming off of the MLK extension, which is a Federal Highway.

A long term strategic plan for buttressing the shoreline throughout the City to include all waterways and creeks that will preserve the shoreline and wetlands, and prevent inundation should be developed. A standardized modular system should be employed that can be readily fabricated and deployed to create a uniformity of look, easy repair, increased height and future augmentation as needed for efficiency in production cost and implementation. The system should provide for tidal wetland shore preservation and development.

The-modification and repair of the Churchland Bridge should provide that the height of the bridge is increased to allow for taller mast sailboats to transit upstream. The improvements to the bridge should be engineered to permit future articulated street cars. All bridges into major estuaries in the city, whenever possible, should be constructed or repaired to permit small craft of at least 6 ft. Draft and 67 ft. masts to navigate into the waterways upstream. This will permit small craft to stir up the bottom and prevent silting up and encourage larger and more expensive boats to utilize our safe harbor. Such action will maximize the economic use of the river, our most important and valuable natural asset.

Funds being collected in the City's "Storm Water Run-off" fees should be prioritized to be used for creek and estuary dredging and shore and seawall buttressing. Deeper channels insure less flooding and more commercial and recreational utility by our citizens and visitors and protects homeowners.

A navigable concrete lined channel should be planned and engineered to be built across the City connecting the Elizabeth with the river's Southern Branch. It would be used as a small-craft shortcut transit to the ICW. It should be designed to be Secured and partitioned by floating locks which would allow it to be pumped dry for cleaning and/or permit the water level to be lowered in times of severe storm or hurricane inundation to serve as an emergency reservoir for excess water caused by street flooding. Boat use of the channel would serve to stimulate business and real estate values along its



course, but also provide flood safety to the Citizens.

City water towers should be retrofired with solar cell banks to be used to generate electricity for pumping and turbines in the tower should be put in place in their trunks to generate electricity to supplement the pumps electric needs.

Above ground water tanks should be strategically installed throughout the City in proximity to routine inundation. These towers should be kept primed for their inline pumps to activate automatically allowing the tanks to act like large sponges which can be engaged at times of flooding to take the excess water off the streets and store it above ground. As the ground flooding subsides, the stored flood water can be slowly released back into the storm drains. Solar cells and outflow turbines charging DC batteries and using transformed and modulated AC current will drive motors that will make these units almost self-sufficient and effective in emergency circumstances. Excess power generation can be sold back to the grid.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

Small businesses must be provided equal opportunity and meaningful incentives which can only be Secured through positive discretionary treatment. Such provisions will assist in providing economic parity and create an equal economic playing field. The current incentives that the City offers are inadequate to small and micro business start-ups. National chains, franchises and corporations should be taxed at higher graduated and scheduled rates. This is the only way to assure that small businesses and our downtown merchants can survive and compete. A lowering of taxes and licensing on small home town and sole proprietorship businesses is critical to the overall survival of Portsmouth. Portsmouth should not depend on just a few big box stores for all its needs. Price is important, but not everything! Luring international and national corporate mega-stores or large scale developers, to our City, which have gross and disproportional competitive advantage over local entrepreneurs and family run businesses, is imprudent business economics and could bring about unexpected and catastrophic economic disaster. As in all finance and business ventures diversification is a safer strategy to long term success and survival than putting all your eggs in one basket. Our City must recognize that with the internet today, fixed location retail stores are losing competitive advantage and the associated regulations and taxes that accompany brick and mortar businesses are unattractive and inconvenient to retail buyers, must pass on those costs. Today, more and more, customers use such stores only for showroom viewing, while they order on line. Retailers have little incentive to occupy storefronts, where taxes and overhead are detrimental encumbrances to profits. On the other hand, online virtual storefronts have a target market that is not local, but national or international, where inventories can be minimized through drop shipments, just in time ordering and regional warehousing. Indoor malls focused on retail stores and suburban lifestyles are being severely pinched. Portsmouth and all older established business communities need to address these realities with new thinking that makes shop fronts, local restaurants and entertainment viable in a quickly changing environment in which retail, live entertainment and real food are giving way to virtual reality, canned music, videos and fast food.

The new model for Portsmouth must be built upon several legs. The City requires a rapid transport system that brings in tourists, travelers and visitors to the City directly by train from wealthier cities and regions. For those who come into our downtown, having arrived by ferry or light rail from Norfolk, we must be capable of transporting them on a ride-for-free trolley system in the Downtown. Portsmouth



must become the the rail transportation hub for Hampton Roads, which will make us the richest and most vital city in the area.

Portsmouth must manufacture goods for sale and distribution that are made locally and regionally and can be produced in cottage industries or in small workshops. We must train students and workers to be skilled and capable of producing such goods. We must promote light manufacturing of direct sale items and we must develop a high quality reputation for such products. We can be competitive against lower cost imports, by targeting a higher income market and by bringing that market to ourselves as tourist and visitors. By creating uniqueness and style that can be marketed by new electronic technology more broadly outside our borders, but that cannot be easily replicated because of their uniqueness and authentic character, we can develop a branded superior quality reputation for Portsmouth goods. The items we produce should have a local character and distinction that helps identify the City and Virginia to the outside world.

Main distribution warehousing in the City should be considered for local resourcing while retailers should aim to expand their product lines and inventory to employ regional and national distribution warehousing, internet and online catalog sales. Retailers in the City might do well to look at the business and marketing models of Cracker Barrel, Vermont Country Store and Lands End. These businesses have proven to be very successful in setting a new retail paradigms and standards for postmodern entrepreneurship which employ a mix of store front, market chain catalog sales and tech savvy modalities. They support old line, heritage, traditional and unique products and markets, yet expand their reach into new areas with a broader market scope. They engage the public in a contemporary approach, which plays on nostalgic sentiment but reaches out to an ever changing modern world. Studying and emulating these very successful business and marketing models, Portsmouth can keep alive the character of its traditional small business street-scapes with key store-front retailers that serve as an entrée and touch and feel extensions to larger mail order businesses. By catering to the walk-in tourist traffic, neighboring small independent businesses will be stimulated by an increase in foot traffic. This kind of planned and focused business development will create a lively and engaging stimulus, competitiveness and activity in the Downtown and Midtown Districts. This strategic plan will bring in capital from outside our borders, create production and retail sales jobs for our own citizens and create a rebirth in our City. As we bring more outside capital into the City this will increase our *per capita* average income, offset our personal property taxes, and provide additional revenues to the City which we can use to further expand our economic growth and improve our quality of life and public services.

Bringing a high speed train terminal into Portsmouth will immediately create a greater demand for public lodging, meals and entertainment which will increase the City's revenues and rapidly grow our economy and provide a significant expansion in the needs for service jobs in these areas. Hotel and restaurant facilities should be expected to be built in the direct vicinity of the terminal which would open up growth at the most western end of the D-2 District and this would be a real shot in the arm in stimulating infill businesses going back along High and County Streets eastward to Effingham Street. We can expect that our existing hotels will also benefit from the increased need and we should anticipate these properties making improvements, upgrades and an up-scaling of their facilities as demand and cash flow increases. All of the Uptown and Downtown businesses should be stimulated significantly. The high speed train terminal should also encourage and demand a better quality land use of the neighboring area and promote private development. Portsmouth should insure that the terminal, the



adjacent area and the hotels built in the vicinity are constructed of lasting materials and of ★★★★★ quality and design that make a lasting first impression on people stepping off the train. The architectural designs of all the facilities in the area should be in a style that reflects the historical Downtown and our heritage that will not only add character, but value to visitor experiences. That image should set in the minds of travelers arriving and departing from our terminal an immediate and impressive lasting vision that will define our City. This image should set the standard in Portsmouth for all future development. The terminal should face a well-designed large public plaza that creates a cardinal point within the City that establishes a bench mark for and a guidepost to the future formal growth and urban development in the City. This terminal should be thought of and will become the hub of all land rapid transit in Hampton Roads. All of us must understand from inception that this investment and commitment will not just serve and benefit Portsmouth. With this terminal Portsmouth will once again become, a vital resource and asset to all the region. Moreover, this terminal will economically turn our City around and launch us into the future, for it is the key to our future success

The Department of Economic Development should work with the Old Dominion University Department of Political Science and the Old Dominion Research Foundation to develop a survey targeted at former and current business owners in the Downtown and Uptown Business Districts to determine the sentiments and reasons, through statistical analysis and anecdotal report, to make determinations into why merchants and restaurants either stayed in or abandoned our City over the last four years. From this study the City should develop remedies to stop the bleeding and overcome and reverse the blight that has been felt from the loss of our small businesses in these districts. In conjunction with this study Economic Development and Old Dominion Research should calculate the economic and tax revenue losses of the various businesses that have left the City and correlate the overall financial impact in a comprehensive report. Included in this study should be the economic impact that has resulted from the reduction in local business competition and the economic ramifications resulting from concentration of the remaining businesses into fewer hands. The competition from big box corporations that have opened up along Fredrick Blvd. should be addressed to determine if it has caused the economic erosion along High Street from the Belt Line Railroad to the waterfront along High Street. In this study the effect of corporate chain stores and restaurants upon small independent businesses should be statistically analyzed. The ODU Political Science Department should be asked to study these reports to determine through quantitative statistical analytic review whether there was local economic or political causation outside of the collapse of the general national economy that encouraged the massive business flight from our Uptown and Downtown Business Districts in the last four years. This assessment and findings should be substantiated not only through comparative tabulation but also by anecdotal interpretation to determine if a broader picture can be extrapolated from the various sources that are more than anomalous. The study should also seek guidance from existing and lost small businesses and lending institutions into what they would like to see in the way of support and help from the City that could have prevented them from leaving, would entice them to return and what would be needed or could be provided to encourage new business to come to the City or others to relocate here.

Portsmouth should work with SCORE, Portsmouth Partners, the Chamber of Commerce, the VA , TCC, ODU and NSU Business Departments and other government and non-governmental organizations to develop and supplement funding programs as an incentive for start-up businesses, and entrepreneurial efforts through management training and mentoring to anyone wanting to launch a small business in Portsmouth. A specialist with the Department of Economic Development should coordinate and liaison with all prospective small business developers to assess what needs, opportunities and advisability can



be resourced to bring about such endeavors. The specialist should establish a liaison with a SCORE mentor and a local Portsmouth business mentor for prospective entrepreneurs. Particular emphasis should be focused on the Downtown and Uptown D-1, D-2 Districts, Cradock and Port Norfolk areas and other parts of the City which are marginalized or undeserved by jobs or services. Specific incentive grants must be developed to infill empty lots and occupy vacant buildings in the City in our existing business districts.

Off-street parking, set-back, easement and parking restrictions in the Downtown Business District should be eased or eliminated to allow for construction on our many empty lots. Our City's current zoning restrictions are the greatest impediment to development in the Downtown and Uptown districts. In the South-side and elsewhere throughout the City where solitary or few houses stand out on near-empty blocks or where blocks have housing gaps in them, the City should contract with building movers to move houses from one location to another to consolidate neighborhoods and pass the cost benefits on to private owners and insist that PRHA show cause for not making such consolidations on land that it owns. The City should write CBOE grants for such consolidations, target property for such moves, and provide incentives for utility hook-ups, ground clearance and landscaping to entourage such projects.

The building tax portion of our Property Taxes should be eliminated City-wide and the tax rate on land increased to encourage development to the maximum footprint and to encourage better building quality and standards on all land and particularly vacant land, to maximize utility of the City's topography and geographic resources.

Churches should be taxed on parking lots at a special rate, or given a reduced rate if their lots are shown to be used and actively utilized by the general public during none service hours if the situation warrants such consideration and utility.

On-street parking in the Uptown District should be increased in certain Sectors by reducing the depth of the sidewalk right-of-way. Trees should be augmented to soften the industrial street-scape and encourage commercial development and structural reconstruction, rehabilitation, restoration and facade improvement. Brick sidewalks should be extended along High Street to Elm Avenue to soften the blighted look of the historic Uptown Business District. Likewise, the side streets should have brick sidewalks laid to beautify the entire area and encourage rehabilitation, reuse and commerce. Incentives should be granted for the area to current owners to rehabilitate and restore their buildings and Economic Development, PRHA and the owners should come together to determine what the owners of the properties would like to see done with their properties that will create economic growth in the Districts and revive this important Section of High Street. The focus of the City in applying for Federal CBOE grants should be to encourage the economy and business and promote jobs and not just for welfare housing schemes.

The City should focus on developing the properties facing High Street from the 1400 block to Norcom High School and the Social Services building for four and five story upper story rentals, and condos, with first floor retail businesses. These properties should be targeted to an upper end markets and built in compliance with Form Based Review, but quality of construction and building materials should be emphasized. The skyline of the street-scape should have a variegated look and add character to the environment. Brick sidewalks and trees and diagonal parking should be incorporated in the designs.



All newly constructed parking garages in the City should provide ground floor retail and/or office space utility and as feasible structural design above the first floor should be made to accommodate future retail or office space conversions of those floors. Parking Garages should be designed to not look like parking garages, but blend into the environment.

Land Banking using Federal monies is illegal and where PRHA has demolished homes and buildings, removed those former businesses and structures from the tax rolls, and has been sitting on such land for an inordinate time, particularly in the Downtown, they should be required to sell the property for development immediately to return the property to the tax rolls. Failing to do so, PRHA should be required to pay taxes on the land's assessed values, until disposal has been made, to encourage PRHA to act. The City should investigate into whether PRHA as failed to meet its development objectives and redevelopment time requirements, as stated in CDBG grants which were received from HUD and submitted by the City. The City should demand an explanation from PRHA for any failures of PRHA in acquisition of such properties in which demolitions took place as to why no redevelopment has been carried out.

At the North and South sides of High and Chestnut Street two three story office buildings should be constructed that would incorporate diagonal setbacks at the opposing corners as a symbolic entrance into the Downtown, as Chestnut Street was the original city line. These buildings would distinguish the entrance into the historical Olde Towne.

A two story open air Public Farmers Market should be built on the empty lot on the South Side of the 1100 block of High Street. The first floor should be reserved for fruit and vegetable vendors and the Second floor for dairy products, preserved meats, dried produce and handmade craft goods.

The City Hall, Jail and Sheriff's Offices should be moved to Midtown where they will be central and convenient to all the City's citizens and encourage better democracy and economic development in that part of town while permitting the more touristic and quaint residential and small business district in the Downtown. A possible site for consideration might be the empty lot on the South-East corner of Fredrick Boulevard and Turnpike Road. The waterfront should not dwarf or hog the river view the way current structures do. In time the property south of King Street along the seawall waterfront should be set back as a raised public park and medium rise, broken vista apartments of high quality materials should be raised on raised land, acting as a levy contiguous to the right-of-way along Crawford Parkway, where the City Hall complex now stands. Those structures should be federal in style and the downtown should expand its look and feel to emulate the character of Olde Towne and provide a village like atmosphere such as that of Annapolis and Alexandria, to attract higher income residents and capital. Our downtown should not look like, nor try to emulate that of Norfolk, but rather should be seen from the executive suites of Norfolk's office and bank towers as the softer side of the Elizabeth River where everyone wants to have an urban dwelling or townhouse to come home to.

Uber Technologies, the online cab service, should not be permitted to operate in Portsmouth and if caught their drivers and their company should be charged for operating a taxi service without a license or permit in the City Limits even if they picked up their fare in another city in Virginia. Portsmouth Taxi cabs and drivers must be licensed, and with the costly tunnels and with Norfolk's restrictions on our cab companies, they have difficulties competing and will likely go under if Uber is allowed to steal their business. While Portsmouth cabs can take fares to Norfolk, they cannot pick up passengers at the



Norfolk International Air Terminal, and are not permitted to wait at cab stands, or to pick up passengers within the Norfolk City limits to make a return fare to Portsmouth. Norfolk cabs can take return fares from Portsmouth to Norfolk. This unfair treatment of Portsmouth cab companies and their drivers should end. Portsmouth cab drivers should be allowed to pick up fares for return trips to Portsmouth from Norfolk, and particularly at NIT and at the Norfolk Marine Terminals. Otherwise, Norfolk cabs and their drivers should be required to also carry a Portsmouth cab permit and license to operate in the Portsmouth City limits.

The property bounded by Effingham, County, Chestnut and King Streets should be used to develop a pedestrian Galleria, of four buildings, with glass vaults and a glass dome in the European style, made of top quality permanent materials, to become the gem of the Portsmouth Downtown. This showcase property can have the greatest impact on defining the image of the City for anyone entering Portsmouth from the Downtown Tunnel.

A concerted effort should be made to clean up and revitalize the Afton Square businesses of Cradock and find tenants for the empty storefronts there. After many years the Cradock shopping Center is fully occupied and thriving, but Afton Parkway needs serious attention to its Commons and its business District. Port Norfolk has had a revival in its small businesses and it should be used as a model for Cradock, but it requires greater City focus and attention from Economic Development and PRHA. Landscaping, maintenance, Code enforcement and police are vital to such resurrection. Planned routine activities on Afton square are important for the encouragement of business development and restoration of the empty buildings. The City needs to put together a blue ribbon team composed of members of the Cradock Civic League, the NEAT officer, the Parks and Recreation Department, the Planning Department, the Cradock Design Review Committee, the School Principals, Scout organizations, the VFW and DAV, church deacons and Garden Club representatives to come together to specifically and analytically formulate a master plan for revitalization of Afton Square. With civic engagement and organized regular year round activities a concerted plan for renewal will spring forth from the ashes. The City should assess the condition of every business property on Afton square and work with the owners, PRHA, the Cradock Design Review Committee and the Civic league to develop solutions to their blighted condition and for their re-occupancy and revitalization, based on a report from the blue ribbon committee. Old Dominion University Political Science Department and the Old Dominion Research Foundation should be asked to help develop and analyze the study. This could be a very exciting graduate project that could bring a lot of vitality, youthful drive and energy to finding a solution.

Portsmouth should encourage manufacturing, fabrication and production to preserve and rebuild our skilled craftsmen resources. We should strongly support the production of goods for export out of this City, nationally and internationally. We should promote fabrication and services which support the Federal Government and also local and regional industry. The City should provide incentives for manufacturers and job shops to come to our City, who can provide skilled jobs and bring in fresh capital from outside our City limits. We should work with and solicit manufacturers and find out what skill sets are needed in their workforce and educate and supply those human resources to them from within our own community. We should do everything possible to encourage the employment of our own Citizens and support local production that will bring outside revenues into our City to increase our wealth and reduce our local unemployment.

The City should readjust its manufacturing machinery tax to discriminate between mass production line equipment and machinery used by skilled labor to produce individual custom items and fabrications and



repairs. Mass production line equipment should be taxed because it puts workers out of jobs and only requires unskilled or semi-skilled workers and reduces labor needs, whereas machine equipment that is used by skilled workers to produce individual items should be encouraged by no taxation as it utilizes skilled labor which is hard to replace. It is costly to train and develop such technical abilities in craftsmen and innately requires a higher level of skills, knowledge, intelligence and abilities. Skilled labor is higher paid, requires more training and as a scarce labor commodity it is in high demand. Portsmouth should promote and do everything in its power to retain skilled workers in the community because they are a rare asset today. Taxing non-production-line machinery is counter intuitive and discouraging to economic progress.

The City should curtail and draw down its Community Development Block Grants for welfare projects and public housing schemes and concentrate its efforts on encouraging small businesses, start-ups, and business incubators and develop projects for offsetting business facility costs that will bring skilled jobs and capital into our economy. This is something the City and PRHA have failed to do in at least the last ten years.

### **MARITIME INDUSTRY:**

Portsmouth needs to stop whining about all of our un-taxable land owned by the Federal Government. This is an insult to our Shipyard, the Naval Hospital and to our Coast Guard and Post Office workers. Such complaining is not constructive nor beneficial. On the other hand, all of our citizens reap great economic rewards from every one of these Federal institutions. These benefits can be manifestly increased if we make our City a place where Federal employees servicemen want to live and do business. Making disparaging remarks only alienates the hand that feeds us. Portsmouth needs to always look for ways to liaison with the Federal Government to maximize our relationship for our mutual interests and economic well-being. Ships and sailors coming to Portsmouth are still our principle economic resource and they are the livelihood for many of our citizens. We need to respect that fact.

The City should work to bring a private Merchant Marine School to Portsmouth, preferably on the waterfront, where life boat and water safety training could be conducted. This facility could also be used by the Portsmouth and Norfolk Marine Police Patrols and certified training programs for waterfront policing could be developed. Such programs could become a benchmark training facility for marine security training in the nation. This facility could also encourage students in Sea Scouting and the Coast Guard Auxiliary in in their Marine Safety and Better Boating Practices courses and in boat certifications. The more Portsmouth focuses its attention on boating, the more boaters will focus their attention on Portsmouth! A maritime training facility in Portsmouth would be a natural economic and industrial fit and would promote our nautical role on the Atlantic Seaboard. Students to Coast Guard certified maritime schools come from all over the country and not just locally. They have to stay for several days in hotels and eat in restaurants and their presence in our city would have a multiplier effect on our greater economy, and to our marine industries and the military. By providing trolleys in our downtown which will link up to our downtown restaurants and hotels and entertainment, Portsmouth will benefit enormously. A Merchant Marine School in Portsmouth would benefit the Military Sealift Command, NOAA, the Corps of Engineers and the numerous tug, barge and marine fuel transport businesses in the region, whose workers need routine and constant certification, re-certification and training. If Portsmouth can get the Coast Guard to open a Regional Examination Center in Portsmouth, our location and these benefits to mariners would make Portsmouth a standout on the East Coast. If we



can get a Merchant Marine School in Portsmouth or our TCC Campus to open a certified Marine Electronic Officer training program in possible conjunction with the Shipyard Electronics shop we could provide a very needed marine industry training curriculum, for which there is none in the country. The ETO position is one of the highest paid careers in the Merchant Marine. This high value training opportunity would attract students from all over the country and its presence would encourage our students in electronics and technologies in the public schools and at TCC to pursue careers in marine electronics or shipboard electronic repair through the Shipyard Electronics Apprenticeship Program.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY:**

The City should upgrade the category and status of the Olde Towne District and certify individual properties there to be placed on the National Historic Registry and with the Virginia Department of Historic Preservation for protection.

The City should liaison with the Director of the Virginia Department of Historic Preservation to formally assure that the City's design review committees are understood to be a vital part of the States §15-2306 compliance link that makes up the triad of historical review and authority in the State, when it comes to modifications, preservation, new construction or demolition in National Historic Districts. The City needs to formally recognize that the VDHP is the principal "constituent party", requiring formal authorization, along with other neighborhood entities that must always be consulted in cases of new construction and demolition, and must be a party to any Memorandum of Agreement in consideration of any such actions. The City should inform the State VDHP that such locally appointed design review committees are the Department's "eyes on the ground" in assuring that 36 CFR 800.5 of the Federal Code is complied with, and that both the State and the City Committees should jointly liaison and co-ordinate their efforts in co-operation. The City should notify the VDHP that such local Design and Architectural Review Boards and Committees should be and are to be notified of any and all new construction or demolitions within the areas of their responsibility, and that these Design Review Boards and Committees are the local prime constituent party for notification and that their approval must be granted before any further consideration for new construction or demolition can take place or any Memorandum of Agreement can be drawn up or signed by other parties in keeping with Federal and State Law.

The residential streets, of all neighborhoods, starting with the historic districts and sequentially progressing throughout the city should be paved with river pebble surfaces except on the main corridors of heavy use thoroughfares to distinguish them as residential neighborhoods and to beautify their environments and make them more livable. Unobtrusive speed bumps should demarcate the entrances to all such neighborhoods to discourage non-resident through travel on those streets. The asphalt patching of the pebbled streets of Olde Towne should stop and they should be re-surfaced and patched with river pebbles.

Curb stones in the Uptown and Downtown should be reset and brick sidewalks maintained and re-graded as necessary and such maintenance should be considered a necessity for upholding the charm and character of our historic areas. Such matters should not be viewed as high maintenance amenities to be replaced with less costly but more contemporary engineering solutions. Stone and brick are near permanent solutions that just need to be periodicity maintained. If such sidewalks and curbs are re-laid on concrete foundations their maintenance will be greatly minimized and drainage grades will be



maintained. The City should develop a long term plan to undertake such efforts. On the City's side streets, where cobblestones have been paved over with asphalt, we should bring them back to their original character or pull up those stones to use elsewhere. Using Belgium block as curb stones has been a beautiful enchantment adding charm to communities in other cities in the country. Portsmouth should develop a master plan to accomplish these endeavors and to establish clear objectives, time tables and budgeting. Where there is opportunity and need, cobblestones and granite curb stones should be laid to extend this enhancement further into residential areas of Olde Towne, South Side and Park View in particular.

The City's brick sidewalks should be extended along High Street from Effingham to Elm Avenue. Queen and King Streets should be laid in cobblestones to encourage business development and shop fronts facing the street by enhancing the streets charm as narrow lanes.

The City should resume weed killing in the Downtown Sidewalks and in the allies in accordance with its obligations under the law. Likewise, it should pick up debris and items dumped in the streets, alleys and sidewalks, which it has ceased doing for several years.

Throughout the City, whether in PRHA Projects using HOPE VI HUD funds or other CDBG endeavors, developments are taking on a cookie cutter look in which these projects are overly dense and over built. They are constructed of low cost and low quality materials, while often employing street-scape facadé materials of a higher quality or standard and casing the remaining three sides of the structures in substandard materials... This is the delusion of a Potemkin Village. In some new development projects, the yards are of such minimal area that their purpose is marginal and questionable, while recreational areas for children are barely being provided for or addressed. PRHA is repeating its major mistake of overbuilding, made in the public housing units that were originally built in the 60's, and which are now being replaced with these new homes. But in the case of these earlier public housing units, they were designed with solid fortress-like indestructible materials, built to withstand the roughest conditions and abuse. These new developments are pretty but flimsy and cheap and in the case of multi-story buildings, it would appear that their materials are only meeting minimum building code and their construction materials give the appearance of being fire traps. In fact, there have been several devastating major fires in Portsmouth and in the surrounding cities recently which deserves cautionary scrutiny in regards to whether or not buildings are being built to code or the bar is too low for public safety. It would seem that some of these buildings in Portsmouth are designed to last for about as long as a standard mortgage. If so, one must question, what is the real purpose and benefit of these dwellings and who are the real beneficiaries. Portsmouth is using design stamps from another era to replicate and emulate a certain genre, but in so doing, in its repetitiveness, it is creating mundane Levitt Towns of the future, in which the freshness of today, will be seen tomorrow as mundane, boring and worn out before its time. This situation rests squarely on the shoulders of PRHA. It has graduated through all the same social elevation and financial schemes and permutations HUD has developed, like many other American cities. But PRHA cannot seem to ever distinguish itself, or do anything outstanding or really creative that exhibits real talent or thoughtfulness when it comes to urban planning. It runs HUD money through its veins just to keep alive, but fails to understand the *élan vital* of good design or developmental restraint. None of PRHA's projects have set a standard that is trans-formative or stimulates further independent investment and private development. PRHA's problems are institutional and systemic. The City needs to seriously study how NRHA successfully redeveloped Ghent and its downtown to understand the true failure of PRHA in comparison. This is one of the



greatest stumbling blocks to our future progress in Portsmouth and needs to be addressed.

It is the responsibility of the City of Portsmouth to regulate all right of ways in the City, both private and public, under State Code, for the safety and health of the people. The State does not require that the City improve any property it has taken in annexation or acquisition, but the Courts have ruled that if a City does make improvements, it is bound by law to maintain such right of way improvements to that same standard. The City over the last ten years has failed in its required duties to carry out its obligations in this matter and has resorted to increasingly lesser grade repairs, to doing no maintenance, and even to attempting to pass off its duties to private citizens. This must end. The City must meet its requirements under the law and maintain right-of-ways to the standard of their former improvements and not use substandard repairs or materials which are eye sores to the public and an embarrassment to our City. The public right-of-ways must be maintained by the City for the health and safety of the public in a pro-active manner and not as a reactive one in response to law suits or injury claims. Reactive responses rather than pro-active ones cost us all dearly in the long run.

Code should be enacted to prohibit, within the City, the burial of toxic and environmentally detrimental materials or products and the dumping of dangerous or hazardous materials onto the ground, into the gutters and right-of-ways, sewers and waterways.

The City should work with our numerous older residential neighborhoods in the City, to enhance their livability and community by targeting problems, prioritizing and making neighborhood improvements and assuring routine maintenance and services are being efficiently and effectively being performed. Having a City Council partially composed of Wards men will assure that neighborhood issues are being addressed and that the Wards will have a spokesman on the Council accountable for the people's concerns. The Planning Department working with neighborhoods through outreach coordinating teams (as Norfolk does with its College Place Design Center) and by promoting the City's plant and tree growing service, neighborhoods will be stimulated to self-improvement. This will help bring neighbors together to revitalize their properties and homes, while boosting community activism and engagement. Government and people will be stimulated by this kind of engaging and participatory democracy at the grass roots level. Our numerous residential neighborhoods should be and remain the solid foundation building blocks of our Government.

#### **GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT INCITIVES:**

Coordination should be made with the Naval Shipyard, the Naval Hospital and the Coast Guard at all opportunities to engage their workers and staff in joining in the support and vitality of the City's Downtown in supporting public transportation, housing, retail, entertainment, hotels and restaurants. The City should provide incentives and encouragements to servicemen and Federal workers to interact with the City's retail, entertainment and lodgings in particular. Economic Development should have a Tourist Coordinator on staff who would link with business, particularly in the Downtown and Uptown to provide theme and event driven discounts to encourage Service members and Shipyard employs to visit our businesses during lunch hours, in the evening and on weekends.

The City should encourage the Federal Government to relax the security at the Naval Hospital so that the Bandstand and Grounds can be open to the general public once again for its scenic beauty, fishing and entertainment. The City should work with the Hospital administration to provide Sunday afternoon



outdoor music by Navy and City musicians to improve relations and livability of the Downtown.

The Trophy park at the entrance to the Naval Hospital should be better landscaped and have more trees.

The City should explore with the Coast Guard the possibility of a joint venture to build a parking garage and commercial/retail building on the CG parking lot at the corner of High and Court, which could generate revenue for the City and the Federal Government. This would provide safer and enclosed parking for the CG and eliminate their parking lot eyesore at the City's most important intersection in the historic Downtown. Such a venture would greatly improve the urban streetscape at the foot of High Street and make a sorely needed connecting link to the waterfront.

The City and the Navy should discuss building a very solid and beautiful Shipyard museum and library on part of the grounds where the jail now stands, to be set in an oak shaded meandering trophy park, along the waterfront which would accompany and surround the building. This move would enhance the tourism, properties and the utility of the south side of High Street along the waterfront and upscale the South-side residential neighborhood. This will encourage better quality development there and better promote home ownership.

The City should adopt policies and similarly encourage the Naval Hospital, the Shipyard and the Coast Guard to use coordinated flex scheduling and provide longer lunch breaks so that their workers will not bottleneck London Blvd and Effingham Street with automobile traffic, at rush hours, but can shop or eat meals in the Downtown. Critical to making this successful will be the City providing free-ride Trolleys in the Downtown. Free, convenient and reliable transportation in the Downtown will be the loss leader that will drive the revival of businesses and restaurants in the area.

The City and our legislators should encourage the Coast Guard to move its Regional Exam Center from Baltimore to Portsmouth. Baltimore has relatively little maritime traffic and the only imaginable reason for the REC to be located there is because of politics and its convenience to the Masters Mates & Pilots Union and the Seaman's International Union training facilities which are both located on the Maryland Peninsula. Hampton Roads is the home of the Coast Guard Atlantic Command and Commander 5<sup>th</sup> Coast Guard District is in Portsmouth. The Military Sealift Command is headquartered at the Naval Base and the NOAA Headquarters Atlantic, the Corps of Engineers, and the SIU Union Hall are all on Brambleton Avenue in Norfolk only minutes away from Downtown Portsmouth. The Chesapeake Bay Pilots of Virginia and Maryland maintain their offices and berths at Little Creek and our harbor has numerous tug, salvage and dredge vessel firms managed and dispatched from our harbors. Hampton and Newport News have sizable fishing fleets in their harbors. TCC has a maritime program at its VA Beach facility, and two private CG approved maritime schools are located in Norfolk and in Hayes. Much of the REC functions of the Coast Guard are now carried out in Martinsburg, WV. Yet, the REC in Baltimore still handles important bureaucratic functions. If the REC were moved to the Portsmouth Downtown that would be significant to the City's prestige and enhance our revenue flow, through the multiplier effect. A CG REC would be a tremendous assist and convenience to mariners in the Mid Atlantic as well as a real plumb for Portsmouth.

The City should encourage the Norfolk Naval Shipyard to return the Under Four Flags at the main gate of the Yard and go back to the original Shipyard seal. Tourism is one of the biggest businesses if not the biggest business in Virginia (over \$23 Billion in 2015) and that tourism is built upon the



Commonwealth's important history. the Shipyard is Portsmouth's most important asset, employer and historical foundation stone. Those Four Flags are important in explaining and promoting our history and are a vital part of our tourist draw. The Four Flags distinguish the Norfolk Naval Shipyard in the nation, Naval history, and in the history of the New World. This is something in which every one in Portsmouth should take pride.

The City Traffic Engineer should work with the Shipyard Commander and the Naval Hospital Commander and the 5<sup>th</sup> Coast Guard Commander to encourage carpooling and private mini-bus use by their workers.

The City should encourage the Army Corps of Engineers to escalate the dredging of the Elizabeth River to handle Novo Suezmax vessels. Portsmouth should not be left behind in capturing our market share of potential increased container traffic because our river depth cannot accommodate these larger vessels. The Portsmouth terminals are deep enough to handle such greater draft vessels, but the channel depth is restricting this usage. The PMT needs to be brought back to full capacity as soon as possible and this will be difficult in light of higher cost Chinese goods and their shrinking economic production and the increasing cost of their goods. If inbound traffic is diverted to Bayonne or Savannah this will impact our rail traffic to Charlotte, which is the Mid-Atlantic rail and inter-modal container hub. This will be potentially detrimental to Hampton Roads and Virginia. Portsmouth needs to maintain and strengthen its rail transportation links and commerce with Charlotte. Having the Elizabeth river maritime channel dredged deeper soon is very important.

The City should encourage all governmental parties to escalate the building of the Craney Island marine terminal and the construction of the Third Crossing, beginning with the Western Branch link. This project has been languishing for a dozen years. We need to get it moving.

The City should work with our State and Federal Legislators to push for the Corps of Engineers to dredge Scott's Creek up to London Blvd., Hull Creek and at Swimming Point to increase our small vessel traffic and to expand the mooring basin off Swimming Point. The silting up of Scott's Creek is being contributed to, in particular, because of culverts running off of the MLK Freeway which dump storm-water runoff directly into the creek... The Federal Government has a direct responsibility in this matter and is a considerable reason for the creek being silted up. We must hold the Federal Government accountable for this unacceptable and ongoing condition. Without dredging, the creek will not be able to accommodate small craft, whose usage is necessary to stir up the creek bottom, to keep it open. One only has to look at the ancient seaports of Rome to understand how important boat traffic is in regards to maintaining open harbors. We must learn from past mistakes and their consequences to avoid or remedy them in the present and into the future.

The Mayor needs to spearhead the development of a high speed rail terminal at the CSX rail terminal in Portsmouth. That means encouraging the groundwork discussions with the three railroads and the Regional Transportation Committee and with Norfolk's Mayor in particular. It means working with our state representatives, and in Particular Sen. Lucas whose district the rail would pass through going up to Petersburg. Portsmouth needs to reach out to Petersburg, Richmond, Fredricksburg, Springfield and Charlotte, NC to energize this rail concept as a matter of regional concern and economic importance. It means getting our Governor and the State Department of Transportation on board and promoting the concept, and it entails working with our Federal legislators to assure that the Federal Department of



Transportation supports this initiative fully. The Mayor needs to work with the Governor in coordinating a round table discussion with the Mayor of Washington, DC, Petersburg, the Governor of North Carolina, the Mayor of Charlotte, the Federal Department of Transportation and the railroads to mobilize funding and a logistical plan to assure the high speed train from Springfield to Portsmouth terminates in the heart of our City!

The City needs to take the initiative to see that the tolls on the tunnels and bridges coming into and out of Portsmouth are paid for by some other means than by destroying our own Citizens and killing this City's businesses. We lost nearly half of our Downtown businesses within just months of the approval of the tunnel and the bleeding has not stopped yet. This is particularly hard hitting on our restaurants and lodgings, which the City relies on to help keep down residential property taxes. The City spent thirty years and countless tax revenues and years of struggle to rebuild our Downtown after the first tunnel was built and then the second tunnel slowly siphoned off our businesses while our affluent residents abandoned the City for the suburbs. Our Citizens, particularly those working in Norfolk are suffering inordinately and many are at the breaking point financially. Portsmouth is burdened with these tolls, far in excess of others in the region, while these tunnels benefit the entire region. These tunnel fares need to be distributed more broadly across the State, by the heavy tractor trailers and straight trucks moving interstate commerce and by the Federal Government, as the tunnels and the connecting Martin Luther King Blvd become a link in the interstate highway system. It might be said that the Outer Banks of North Carolina will benefit more from the new tunnel than Portsmouth. The tunnel and I264 connector will act as a conduit from I64 via Hampton Blvd. to I264 and I464, as tourist pass over and through Portsmouth using this new short cut to Chesapeake to North Carolina. This link will only exacerbate traffic congestion in Portsmouth, but Portsmouth should not be the greatest bearer of this financial burden. The Region, State and Federal Government need to share this load more equitably. Urban sprawl is spreading all around Portsmouth, siphoning off our assets and providing little benefit to our City. It is important that this City makes sure that those living outside of our boundaries, where taxes are lower, are also contributing to a transportation infrastructure that benefits the entire region.

## **SUPPORTING OUR MILITARY VETERANS**

The City should encourage the Virginia Department of Veterans Affairs to move its Veterans Outreach Office out of the Naval Hospital and into the Portsmouth Downtown. (Access to the Naval Hospital is restrictive to easy access. This will bring military Veterans into our Downtown)

The Hampton VA Medical Center should be encouraged to open a CPAC outreach clinic for its Prime Care Patients in Portsmouth, as it has done in Chesapeake and Virginia Beach. Portsmouth is the hub of Hampton Roads and our location would be far more convenient to inner city Veterans in Portsmouth, North Suffolk, Berkley, South Norfolk, Ghent and in Downtown Norfolk. Locating a CPAC here would certainly strengthen our City's economy. In conjunction with an intra-modal rail system, poor Veterans could get to a clinic, where they might not have access otherwise. It only makes sense to locate a Veterans Outreach Clinic in Portsmouth with its high unemployment, low per capita income and large number of service veterans. It also makes no sense to put Clinics in Virginia Beach and Chesapeake where the richest and largest white populations reside and not in Portsmouth where we have the poorest and blackest population, many of whom do not or can ill afford to own automobiles.

## URBAN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

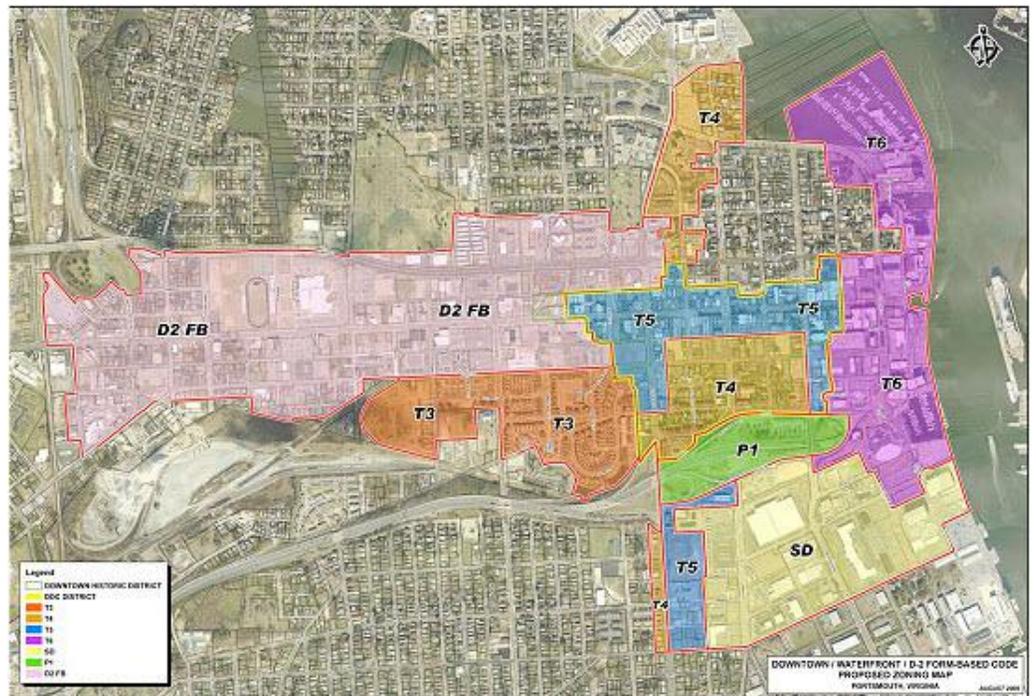
New development in the Downtown, Uptown, along High Street and Portsmouth Blvd in particular should be built to the easement right of way with no set back on the street and preferably parking should always be in the rear. This model should be adopted by encouragement in other places throughout the City as a matter of City beautification. The use of brick and traditional building styles should be encouraged over cheaper materials and styles to create streetscape uniformity and upscale the environment. A public design review committee should be formed and empowered for authority over Portsmouth Blvd.

Billboards should be removed throughout the City on a schedule as they are an eyesore and detraction to safe driving and provide a minimal financial benefit to the City.

In an effort at beautification, signage standards should be improved throughout the City to make the environment more appealing and attractive. A Signage Book should be developed by the Planning Department to promote better public advertising, while providing outstanding examples of comparative high quality signs of various type which are available to business owners. Signage throughout the City should be constrained in scale and made subtler or less obnoxious, while still providing impact and character.

The D-2, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6 and T7 Districts of the City were created over a long period of time to circumvent the intent of the Congress in passing the National Historic Preservation Act and to bypass the

original authority and oversight of the D-1 Downtown Design Review Committee and the State Code. Neither demolition nor new construction within these new districts should take place, nor should they have taken place without the final authority and review of the DDC which was renamed from the D-1 Design Review Committee. Such authority was delegated to the original D-1



Committee in accordance with VA Code §15-2306. Precedence ruled that the D-1 Committee had final authority over demolition and new and major construction and Planning Staff authorizations were not valid without the Committee's final approval. Form Based Review circumvented demolitions or new construction by staff without legal authority. These sub-divisions of the D-1 District were made to



permit PRHA to acquire, carve out, and collect property by land banking (which is illegal) and to permit developers to build on those properties without public design review oversight or input. These practices are not in the spirit of the National Historic Preservation Act, circumvented the Virginia Department of Historic Preservation and ignored the intent of the VA Code §15-2306. These practices constitute an affront to the authority of the Design Review Committee. This abuse of power and public deception and disrespect for the Citizens must end immediately. PRHA in particular and those involved in this contrivance must be investigated and where necessary terminated or prosecuted. Where City officials have made false or fraudulent statements that caused the demolition of historic buildings or structures in historic districts in violation of City, State or Federal Law, the City should report those individuals to the Commonwealth Attorney, the HUD IG and/or the Federal District Attorney for criminal prosecution. Full authority of design review and approval should be reinstated for the D-2, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6 and T7 districts to the DDC, Form Based Review should be continued in the D-2 District as the governing model but the circumventing of the DDR for final approval of routine staff reviews and for all review and approvals for new construction and demolitions should be stopped and the DDR Committee should resume their review responsibilities.

The DDC Committee should have its membership composition changed to remove all realtors (who have an innate conflict of interest in the affairs of the committee) and those positions should be replaced by Citizens who are design professions or have related background or knowledge. The DDR Committee should be disbanded and reconstituted as it has been compromised in its effectiveness and failed to perform its responsibilities in the D-2 District. The T-2 - T-7 Districts should be put fully under the control of the DDC Committee. Factors in the Government, through a string of City Managers, and forces outside of the Government have influenced the Council and the Planning Commission to create these sub-districts to circumvent Citizen oversight within the master zone that was the D-1 District. New economic sanctuaries were zoned, in which PRHA, Economic Development and outside contractors could do as they pleased without interference from our Citizens or neighboring property owners, nor be required to meet anything more than the very basic of standards and Codes. This was wrong and I contend that this was a violation State Law and has been a conspiracy to circumvent Federal Law and needs to be reversed immediately.

PRHA should consolidate and close up its Hope VI Projects in the City and concentrate its attention on efforts to bring jobs, businesses and industry to the community that will uplift our population to self-sufficiency and turn away from Federal paternalism. Its future housing projects should be smaller in scale and should encourage better land usage, design, quality of construction materials and diversity of style. While the standards of their future projects should be of higher quality, the square footage of the individual residential housing units should be constrained in size.

The North side of the 800-900 blocks of London Blvd. should be reviewed for rezoning as residential multi-story rental property and a plan should be developed in consultation with the current property owners for such usage.

The City should revisit and address the matter of the old Apex break shoe factory on Fredrick Blvd., an EPA Superfund Site. The City should develop studies and proposals for a plan of best usage or reclamation of that contaminated property and the surrounding area along the boulevard in the context of improved technological advancements, that will enhance safety, improve the visual and health environment and bring revenue and improved livability of the City. Portsmouth should look for ways



to revitalize that area and its surrounding neighborhoods of Washington Park, Douglass Park, Williams Court and Cradock and the Mid-City businesses or at least create buffer zones or *cordon sanitars*, that can enhance the area for the health and safety of the population.

The City should pass an ordinance restricting the maximum height of any building being newly constructed in the City to six stories. The City should encourage rooftop gardens and landscaping on multistory buildings and on the unused top floors of parking garages where possible.

The City should concentrate on encouraging the sale of empty commercial properties the D-1, D-2 Districts and seeing that empty buildings are occupied. Where PRHA owns such empty properties, they should be sold for a minimal charge to see that buyers are able to invest the necessary money into them to restore, rehabilitate or rebuild as quickly as possible and with the best design and materials that can be spent, that will enhance the neighborhoods. All set back, off-street parking, easement restrictions, that would prohibit building on the sites should be waved in the necessity to get the properties back on the tax rolls. PRHA is the majority owner of empty properties and should be directed to act immediately.

PRHA should be directed to divest itself of its numerous empty lot properties, which are an eyesore; many of which are a blight on the community. PRHA acquired these properties through demolition of buildings and turned the empty lots into unproductive and non-taxable public liabilities. They have held some of these unproductive properties for decades. PRHA should be advised to either sell or auction the properties, or develop them, within a short time frame, or be reported to HUD for land banking, which is prohibited, and failure to comply with the requirements, development deadlines and proposals of the CDBG proposals, under which the properties were acquired with public funds. Such disposal should be done in a timely manner and failure to do so should provoke the City to report their failure as a fraudulent use of Federal Funds. PRHA should be advised that failure to dispose of the property in a timely manner will result in the City's seizure of the property under eminent domain for the public use of raising taxes by sale of the land, at auction, to the highest bidder.

The City or PRHA should make a long term contract with a house mover to move isolated usable and restore-able houses to other sites in the City to infill properties owned by PRHA to improve and rebuild neighborhoods.

The City should cease the promotion of higher density rental properties in the Downtown until a street car system is put in place. The encouragement of higher density living in the Downtown and Uptown is inappropriate and unsustainable and unproductive without public transportation and inflates inner-city congestion. Having parking spaces is not a solution – it is endemic of a burgeoning problem.

PRHA should adopt a policy, where possible, that entails the selling of selective properties that are blighted for \$1, as was done in Baltimore and Washington, DC to encourage the restoration and rehabilitation of residential and business properties. The City should on a case by case basis write CDBG requests for restoration, rehabilitation and improvement of such properties to bring them back on to the market or to stimulate economic growth. This will create occupancy of business and culturally important or historic properties.

## **TRANSPORTATION:**



Portsmouth as a City began to die as the automobile became ubiquitous and streetcars and trains stopped running and there was no more need for the car ferry in the City - when the Downtown tunnel was first built. We slowly sank into the mire as we lost our affluent population to suburban sprawl. Our downtown along with retail merchants began to lose businesses and close their doors. As the Midtown tunnel was built this only exacerbated the traffic problems on London Blvd. and Effingham Street. Only our pocketbooks were relieved when the tunnel tolls were reduced and finely dropped. Portsmouth was led to believe that these tunnels were to our advantage, but in the long run the benefit has been marginal to the economy of the City. Both tunnels changed our retail economy for the worse as we slowly inched towards our financial demise. The lifting of the tunnel fares and the Elizabeth River Ferry helped keep our Downtown Retail District afloat for a while and we even had a short near thirty-year revival. Today we face a new situation. The new Midtown tunnel and its high tolls will not relieve congestion caused by a multitude of conflating issues on either side of the Elizabeth River. In fact, the tunnel will exacerbate congestion in Portsmouth and Norfolk, even further. It will cause Portsmouth to be used as a short cut to Nags Head by tourists and truckers using Hampton Blvd in Norfolk, who will find it even more convenient to transit the new tunnel, in their need to get to the rail head on Indian River Road or the Portsmouth Marine Terminals. Within just a couple of months of the new Midtown Tunnel approval we had lost nearly half of our downtown restaurant and businesses. Food, lodging and admission taxes are the highest levies permissible by the State and those taxes are significant in reducing and offsetting increases in personal property taxes. Portsmouth has the highest personal property taxes in Hampton Roads and has just had to raise them because of lost revenues, mismanagement and particularly because of lost business revenue and diminished tourism. Our Citizens, who work in Norfolk and bring revenues into the City are being gouged daily by the tunnel fares and until recently we have all suffered from high fuel costs. These costs drain our entire economy and now our property owners are being told to pay even more burdensome taxes, due to our ever increasing debt. If a worker has to pay \$600 a year for tunnel fares that he earned in Norfolk or a student studying at ODU, Norfolk State or Hampton Institute is soaked for that same sum - That is revenue not going into the Portsmouth economy and we all feel that pain and bear that individual's financial load. Our taxes go up and fresh capital is kept out of our economy. The responsibility for these onerous burdens and our current financial situation must be recognized as the fault of our current Mayor and Council and years of preceding leadership and management. They failed to recognize the slow cancer that was eating at our economy and urban structure. Repeatedly our leaders refused to put Portsmouth first and stand up against others in the region and address the transportation contagion head-on, analytically and with decisive action that could reverse the situation. Our Portsmouth leaders have let other Regional Cities step on us. Those now in power need to pay for their lack of foresight, courage and poor leadership. The situation now requires radical change and a visionary plan if Portsmouth is to survive. As good stewards, anyone elected to office in our City today, must be willing to aggressively put Portsmouth first!

If Portsmouth was stung with the kiss of death when it lost its passenger railroad service to the automobile (which created urban sprawl and sucked the financial blood out of our commercial body), rail can revive our economy once again. Rail can make us not the poorest and most highly taxed City in the region, but the lowest taxed, and wealthiest City in Hampton Roads and revive our Downtown businesses. We previously were the transportation hub of the area and we should reestablish that

position once again. The opportunity is prescient and obtainable at this moment. To achieve this revival takes a multi-faceted approach to inter-modal transportation that will be comprehensive, require long term planning and strategies, commitment and creative financing and novel combinations of government, corporate and public participation. Much of the needed foundations are already in place in Portsmouth in the form of private right-of-ways, railroad equipment and skills, terminal properties, feeder lines, and existing working relations between CSX, NSC and the NPBL railroads and our City. The Midtown tunnel can be modified to accommodate a rail shuttle link that will benefit



Norfolk and Portsmouth. This connection will make Norfolk's Tide a practical and more viable means of urban transportation, while creating real destinations to important work, health care, tourism, education and to the Norfolk and Portsmouth Downtowns by affordable rail transport. Importantly, it will provide an impetus for Norfolk to extent its light rail services to the Naval Base which would be a of huge benefit to both our cities, the Navy, ODU, TCC, NSC, Sentara-Norfolk General EVMS, SIU, NOAA Corps of Engineers, USCG Atlantic, the 5<sup>th</sup> Coast Guard Headquarters, NATO Atlantic, Downtown Norfolk and Portsmouth, and the marine terminals on both sides of the Elizabeth. Portsmouth should no longer take a back seat to regional transportation, but be the leader in regaining our former role as the hub of the region's passenger rail traffic. This takes strong governmental leadership at the top, built upon knowledge of our historical past, recognition of our current situation and a strong desire to persuade and engage other parties to share our vision - to come on-board and ride with us into a prosperous future.



I propose that the City join with the CSX, NSC, NPBL RRs and the State and Federal Departments of Transportation and HRT to develop a high speed train that will connect the Springfield Station (the Washington Metro terminus just south of Washington) with Fredericksburg, Richmond, Petersburg and terminate at the present CSX rail head in Portsmouth. This train should run on a dedicated and seamless long rail elevated track. The speed of the train should be maximized to far exceed and leave automobile competition as it quietly swishes by. Stops should be quick to maximize overall transit time. Elevated tracks will be quiet, safe, beautiful and environmentally beneficial to the countryside. Trains should be procured with a decisive focus on speed and performance, cost, amenities, safety and reliability. Japan, Germany and China currently produce such trains. The CSX rail head in Portsmouth has already been cleared of nearly all of its old rail lines and has a clear right of way available which could be used for a dedicated high speed elevated main line. The CSX yard interfaces with the NPBL (which is owned by both CSX and NSC.) and the NSC. All of these railroads are accustomed to cooperation and joint ventures and shared operations. The Norfolk Southern lines and right of ways could be used for local traffic as well as those of the NPBL to accommodate light rail to Chesapeake, Suffolk, Norfolk and Virginia Beach. The City should build, as a joint venture with the railroads, a very impressive beautifully designed permanent terminal, of solid materials, at the east end of the rail yard. Shops and restaurants should be designed into the Terminal for passenger benefit and to generate revenues and to pay down the construction costs. Surrounding the yard are lands that could be developed for hotels, restaurants and urban developments that would be spawned by the presence of

the terminal and passengers coming to the station. The new Midtown tunnel - 264 connecting freeway passes over the CSX main line rails at the terminal with proper clearance. A driver-less pod shuttle system should be employed to take passengers from the terminal to Norfolk in a loop terminating at the Hampton-Brambelton Tide light rail transfer station at Sentera - Norfolk General Hospital. A combination of electric shuttle pods would be designed and built to carry from 6 to 16-20 seated passengers, to run on the completed highway highway connector to Norfolk, like street cars. They will operate without conductors and be automatically controlled by computer and electronic sensors and be equipped with cameras, just like airports shuttles. Their design would take into account the engineering constraints



of the tunnel. Use of the shuttle should be considered a connecting transfer on tickets bought for use by the Regional Light Rail system. Such a system is already employed at Heathrow Airport in London. This is important, because it means that initial design, engineering and testing has already been done and the bugs in a working system are already ironed out. The needs of our shuttle will advance technology and this will be a tremendous step in the promotion and popularization of efficient transportation modalities on a global scale. It will also put Norfolk and Portsmouth on the map for innovative adoption of practical early entrant solutions to very serious problems that will save time, money and eliminate traffic congestion.

A quaint, railed trolley car system should be built on a modular plan beginning with in the Downtown and Midtown Business Districts that would pick up and discharge customers in front of the rail terminal. The trolley car system should be free for all use in the Downtown and Uptown Districts. This will insure ridership, encourage tourism and entice out of town travelers to visit and stay over in Portsmouth (both IWC boaters, Nauticus cruise passengers and high speed train travelers). The trolley system would interface with the Elizabeth River Ferry. A long term parking garage should be built to accommodate travelers (It would not have to be at the terminal if it were connected to a reliable trolley, street car or light rail that ran on a schedule coordinated with the High Speed Train departures and arrivals.



Not only will a High Speed Train turn Portsmouth around economically but it will absolutely revitalize Petersburg's Downtown, which has downtown a rail depot. Charlotte is fast becoming the rail and inter-modal terminus and transfer point in the South for containers coming from Jacksonville, Savannah, Charleston, Wilmington and Hampton Roads ports. With Charlotte's banking, manufacturing, rail and highway connections and location, their desire to have a High Speed Train connecting with Richmond adds great political support and merit for a terminal in Portsmouth. Portsmouth could end up being the terminus not only for a train to DC, but also to Charlotte, doubling the potential of inbound passengers and cash into our City. This should also stimulate cruise ship usage of our harbor for both Norfolk and Portsmouth. The high speed Charlotte run could terminate at Petersburg which would further benefit that City and provide for Petersburg being able to serve as a connecting station for traffic going east and west, north and south. This would enrich the southern side of the James. As Petersburg becomes more prosperous and has a fast connection with Portsmouth, they will soon be visiting us on the train to shop.

With a terminal in Portsmouth and a shuttle connection at Hampton and Brambleton, Norfolk can concentrate on building the Hampton Blvd. Light Rail. This will benefit students at ODU, NSU and the Portsmouth and Norfolk TCC Campuses. Portsmouth Citizens working at the Naval Base, Norfolk Marine Terminals, NATO Headquarters, Ghent businesses, Lamberts Point, the SIU union hall, the Sentara-Norfolk General EVMS or Downtown Norfolk shops will not have to drive to Norfolk, but can ride the shuttle and Light rail. If even some of our Citizens change their transportation lifestyles and move into denser domiciles and abandon their cars and use public transit, the cost savings to the population will be considerable and those savings can stimulate a higher quality lifestyle and more disposable income. This transformation will upscale the entire Portsmouth economy. One of the richest populations in Norfolk is just across the river in Ghent and in their downtown. If these Norfolk Citizens do not have to drive through the tunnel or have to park in our Downtown, they would be more inclined to visit our restaurants, shops and cultural attractions and events by nearly seamless rail transport. All capital coming into this City from across our borders is a net profit and minimizes the levy that we must place on our own Citizens property by taxation.

For inter-modal transportation to work in Portsmouth it must be comprehensive and must encompass various means of conveyance. A trolley car system is fundamental to the viability of an urban center like Portsmouth, which cannot employ subways because of the high water table. Street cars require more labor



to operate the shorter single unit cars, while longer flexible and articulated street cars are more efficient and less labor intensive, but not as effective in urban centers like Downtown Portsmouth. The charm of heritage replica trolleys add immeasurable character to the community, can get into neighborhoods easier, and are able to make tighter turns than light rail or the longer more efficient and more modern articulated street cars. The older style replica street car transforms an historical district or town, by sound and sensibility into a place of liveliness and provides a distinctive atmosphere. Most importantly, street cars and trolleys can be used by tourist and visitors without cars, and the general public, who can park their automobiles on the periphery of the inner City, and easily get into the Downtown without having to contend with parking. Freeing up automobile parking in any downtown is a very important necessity to inner city revival and a trolley system is a critical component to obtain those objectives. A street car system in Portsmouth is vital to the objective success of profiting from inter-coastal river traffic and its accompanying tourism. When yachtsmen step off their boats and want to go into town for dinner, drinks, buy groceries or get to a hardware store, an available street car is a real bonus reason for laying over in Portsmouth. If our city is to benefit from tourist traffic from Norfolk's hotels or the Half Moon cruise line day tours, then a street car system is imperative in transporting such visitors around our City. If travelers come into Portsmouth on a high speed train and stay overnight or visit as tourist, and want to get around to our historic sites, restaurants and hotels and to the Ferry Terminal - a heritage single unit trolley system is critical to satisfy this need. A modular standardized track system should be laid out. The City should use the railroad expertise of our train companies, which already come into Portsmouth, to design, engineer and lay these lines. The first tracks should be laid in a north-south figure eight from Crawford Parkway along Swimming Point to



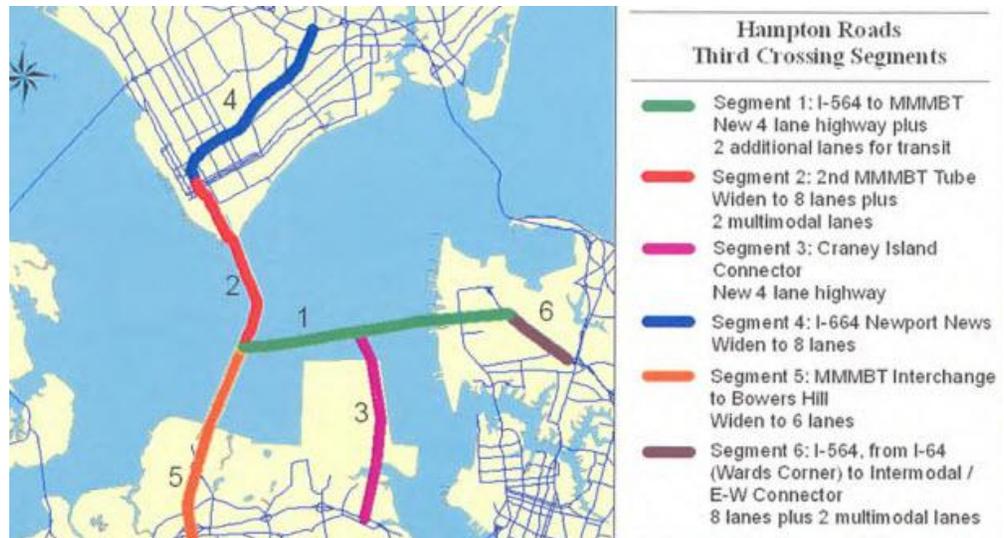
Effingham Street, and then down to just beyond County Street, where they would turn north at City Hall to complete the first loop. This loop should be cut at High Street allowing the trolley to go from the foot of High Street at the water, to Effingham traversing both directions in a complete run. A second tract should connect the Naval Hospital to the Shipyard along Effingham Street. This run would be beneficial to sailors needing to get to either facility and for Federal employees who could park outside of the area and catch the trolley into work and thereby relieve automobile congestion on Effingham Street. A loop should be laid that would run down High Street to the social services building and Norcom High School, turn south to County and then travel back to Effingham where it would complete the loop returning to High Street. This trolley could help transport students and would be a real benefit to anyone in the Downtown needing to get to Social Services. A spur line is already in Place ending on the south side of County Street that could be put into service to carry passengers out to the connecting high speed train's Portsmouth Terminal. Additional loops could be added using existing beds and track and new rails laid in the roadway to connect the various neighborhoods on the east side of the Churchland Bridge. Street cars will help unify all of the City and provide low cost or free reliable service to many people who lack personal transportation, or who can't afford it, particularly the poor, students and the elderly. More importantly, trolleys will get people out of their cars, and encourage less use of the automobile and promote a greater usage of public transport as the inter-modal means for Downtown and intra-city commuting. Portsmouth should look to the successes of other Cities in recognizing the benefits of trolleys and study the engineering experience of trolley usage and resurgence in other American cities such as Seattle, Portland, New Orleans, Tacoma, Philadelphia and Tampa.

Electric shuttles should connect the High Speed Rail terminal at the CSX yard with the Sentera - Norfolk General EVMS Light Rail stop in Norfolk. The shuttles should run like airport shuttles and be one way, utilizing both tunnels. They should be automated and not require conductors or drivers.

Regional light rail plans should be devised that would come into the High Speed Train Terminal and travel to Chesapeake, and up to the Virginia Beach City Center and to the TCC complexes in Portsmouth and Virginia Beach. Light rail could also be routed to Suffolk's downtown. This system would employ existing beds and rails in coordination with and as a joint effort by the private rail lines and the regional cities where tracks and beds are already in place. Tracks in place to Pinner's Point could be used for either light rail or trolley traffic to carry passengers to service Mt. Herman and Port Norfolk and into the middle of the City and Tower Mall. Secondary trolley car lines running through residential neighborhoods should be planned to variate their path so that in some instances wider roads are used to have a mix of automobile and trolley traffic, while in other occasions secondary side streets would accommodate tracks to free up main roads for automobile traffic and build up and strengthen poorer neighborhoods, where residents may not have private cars. The Midtown Second Tunnel was not necessary nor will it mitigate the automobile congestion in either Downtown Norfolk or Portsmouth in its current design. On the other hand, it financially burdens the Citizens of Portsmouth unduly by its tolls. If the Tunnel increases automobile traffic flow from one side of the river to another, it will only create a greater congestion on either side of the crossing. The cause of the increasing congestion must be recognized to understand the solution to the overall traffic problem. The increased housing and greater residential density in Norfolk's downtown have strained both Brambleton and Hampton Blvd. In Norfolk, the expansion of the Sentera Norfolk General EVMS hospital complex and other large buildings at the junction of Brambleton and Hampton Blvd. have bottlenecked traffic at this juncture. The steady expansion and regentrification of Ghent has increased traffic onto Hampton Blvd. Flooding on Hampton Blvd never helps traffic flow. The expansion of Old Dominion University has

log jammed traffic with its swollen population as the university increasingly straddles both sides of Hampton Blvd. Its new football stadium will further exacerbate traffic congestion. NATO Allied Forces Atlantic, NOB and Camp Allen all contribute to the traffic at the Western end of Hampton Blvd. Terminal Blvd. and the expressway outlining the eastern edge of the Naval Base both dump long distance drivers and daily commuters onto Hampton Blvd. But one of the greatest contributors to increased routine traffic and particularly dangerous traffic, for which Hampton Blvd was never designed, comes from its tractor trailer usage. These commercial trucks, with loads of up to 100,000 GWT, transit between the various Port of Virginia Terminals. Their use of Hampton Blvd is an endangerment and destructive abuse and misuse of this road. The same must be said for the tractor-trailers picking up and delivering loads at the Portsmouth Marine Terminal and the Mersk Terminal that come on to Portsmouth city streets. But on the Portsmouth side of the River, at least the heavy container traffic is quickly moved to the Western Freeway. Portsmouth has increased its automobile traffic in the Downtown over the last twenty years because of three events in particular: the provision and allowance for enlisted Navy personnel to live off base; the enlarging of the Naval Hospital; and the moving of the 5<sup>th</sup> Coast Guard Headquarters to Portsmouth. These factors have dramatically increased both the Midtown and Downtown tunnel traffic usage and turned Effingham and London Blvd. into all day parking lots. The new high density rental apartments that first started with the demolition of Portsmouth General Hospital and the density rental development of that property and recently

comparable projects that have exploded onto the landscape with no public oversight or review are yet to be felt in the increased automobile traffic that they will spawn. This increased population will stretch the services, utilities and support requirements of the Portsmouth government in the



near future. Moreover, this increased population will compound the traffic congestion in the Downtown to an unacceptable level without an urban trolley system. There is one variable that can be removed from the tunnel congestion and at the same time lower the commuter and small business costs of the river crossings. That solution is the Third Crossing. While the Midtown Tunnel expansion has been on the drawing boards for thirty years and was executed without due consideration to its consequences and current real need, in relation to Portsmouth, its priority in the larger scope of regional transportation was misguided as the plan was outdated. The Regional transportation focus should have been on the Third Crossing. The planned crossing which will connect the Norfolk International Terminal with Craney Island (where a new marine terminal will be built) where it is projected to split into two paths. One will come up behind Churchland High School and connect to the Western Freeway which will be the least costly and quickest development. The Second path will branch off in the river and parallel the shore on an elevated highway until it connects with the existing bridge-tunnel offshore approach. This path will be costlier to build. The first path, to the Western Freeway is a bit circuitous

for traffic, headed to Newport News, but more direct for the Portsmouth Terminals and for traffic headed to the Indian River Road Rail Head. This path should be developed immediately. We should not wait until the Craney Island Terminal is built. The great advantage in the Third Crossing is that it will create a river crossing and an interstate connection for all container traffic to destinations south of the Elizabeth and James Rivers. This direct path will relieve this kind of dangerous heavy commercial traffic from Hampton Blvd. in Norfolk and will speed up commuter traffic on that road and in Portsmouth. The commercial traffic will be routed immediately onto State and Federal highways and off of the downtown City streets, which not designed to take such heavy loads. This will provide a major safety improvement to all vehicles. The transit from NIT to the PIT will be less trafficked and more direct and the turns will be more gradual for the wide sweeps needed for the tractor trailers. Most importantly, the commercial container traffic headed to interstate destinations can absorb high tolls per load, which can quickly recover the cost of the bridge tunnel construction. A portion of those commercial fees can be used to reduce the current commuter fees on the new Midtown Tunnel and/or retire the construction debt earlier. The second offshore link of the Third Crossing can be built at a later phase in keeping with the accelerating usage, cost recovery and increasing traffic demands. In line with this activity, a comprehensive development scheme, encompassing the planned usage for Craney Island as a deep water terminal should be better articulated so that it can be integrated into the second phase of the Third Crossing Plans. This crossing is integral and vital to the entire Port of Virginia, and particularly to Portsmouth, since we have two marine terminals in our City, and Craney Island will give us a third. Cargo is vital to our existence and important in keeping our personal property taxes low.

Portsmouth should engage with HRT and establish bus routes that can be used by school children. The City should phase out our yellow buses as much as possible and require students to either walk, ride bicycles or use public transportation in getting to and from school. This helps support the public bus systems and encourages exercise in young students. When students ride public transportation with adults aboard they are given role models and adult behavior can guide them in their own behavior. Reducing the yellow buses would save the City School budget considerably. Use of public buses would also create more routes and get more public buses on the streets of Portsmouth. The School Board should underwrite student ticket discounts and HRT should issue bus passes for any student living over a mile and a half from school for middle and high school students. No middle and high school student should be provided vouchers if they live within a distance of a mile and a half of their school.

The City should encourage the use and scheduling of water taxis and boat transportation into the estuaries of the Western Branch, Churchland, Scott's Creek and Paradise Creek Nature Park on regular routes to connect with the Crawford Marina, the High Street Ferry pier, Ocean Marine Waterside and the USS Wisconsin berth in Norfolk, NOB, the Norfolk and the Portsmouth Marine Terminals and Old Dominion University. The City's Traffic Engineer should discuss the possibility of bringing water taxis to the Shipyard at Gate One and to the Naval Hospital.



## **ETHICS:**



I strongly support absolute and complete separation of church and state. Virginia adopted George Mason's Declaration of Rights into our State Constitution and in 1776, and as a representative to the National Constitutional Convention, Mason led the Virginia Delegation in not supporting the ratification of the United States Constitution unless there was a Bill of Rights included. Other States agreed that we should include such a bill in 1787. The Constitution was approved and the Bill of Rights was adopted. In 1789. The first clause of the First Amendment was the requirement of the government to maintain separation of church and state. Its placement in that document was not serendipitous, but calculated to assure the people of the Congress's feelings, commitment and strong support for this matter. It is the separation of church and state that provides for the freedom of religion, specified in the second clause of First Amendment. The Virginians, Mason, Monroe, Jefferson and Madison (the author of the Constitution), were the driving force in asserting this position. They all knew that without separation of church and state, an agnostic government, and a government that holds civil law above religious law, there could be no freedom of religion and that the consequence of government interference or support of religion had historically lead to bloodshed and war. Our forefathers knew, from history, that they wanted to avoid such contention and public discord and they wanted a civil government and not one entwined in religion. I firmly support the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights and as Mayor will not permit religious invocations or prayers in Council Meetings, or Civic events, as they are improper and out of order.

I am firmly opposed to the engagement and support of gambling by government. While scratch cards lotteries may be the accepted norm for the State, I feel that it is irresponsible for government to sponsor and promote gambling, including "riverboat gambling", "casinos", "dog racing" and other such propositions that have been floated before the people of the City of Portsmouth in the past. This City has enough problems with corruption, crime, hard drugs, poverty, a loss of small businesses and government incompetence weighing us down, to take on the added burden of legitimatizing or promoting gambling. We should not open the doors to gambling's incumbent negative effects on a population already strapped and stomped down. There is a thin line between a government and a mafia. We as a City should keep that distance as far apart as possible and not engage in the promotion of habitual vices that have a deleterious effect on our people and lead them to their own demise, or that might entice government corruption. It is the responsibility of government to be visionary and creative in encouraging legitimate wealth by promoting the development of goods and services to outside markets. The Government should be accountable and willing, as necessary, to raise taxes and revenues for the public good and constructive purposes. The government should have courage in raising taxes but show prudence in not seeking funds for trivialities or squandering. Government should use the money of the people, their masters, as good and faithful servants, but not be timid in informing the people of losses, unexpected costs, or the need to raise additional capital. Our City leadership should not prey upon the ignorant, gullible and addicted to satisfy their own timidity and cowardice by encouraging exploitative state sponsored gambling, just for the easy lucre it might bring to the City coffers.

No member of the City Council or other high officials should accept gratuities and gifts from lobbyist, or those seeking contracts or approvals from the City. In the past Councilmen have received stock from Cable TV, riverboat gambling and other such interests, as if nothing was wrong, it was the norm and the standard way doing business. Even though such matters were exposed in the newspapers, nothing became of it and no one was prosecuted, as the public accepted this kind of behavior as if it was to be expected. This failure of the state or the people to act, and make officials accountable, distances



the people from their government, undermines the democratic process and the faith of the people in our own liberty and our belief and expectation of honest government. This should not be! The State Code is slim on laws that will hold officials (elected and staff) accountable unless there is direct corruption involving money or gifts. Laws should be enacted to sanction less overt but glaring examples of improper and unethical behaviors or abuse of power. Elected and staff officials must be held accountable for their behavior and not be allowed to hide behind shield of sovereign immunity. Sanctions should be targeted at misbehavior, abuse of office and failure to carry out or flaunt the law.

The City periodically hires law firms specializing in immanent domain and public negligence cases, rather than using the City Attorney's staff. This creates a subtle conflict of interest for those firms and gives them an excuse to not work for a Citizen who may be aggrieved. This practice creates a situation that makes it near impossible for Citizens to bring cases against the City for negligence or to seek civil damages. This is wrong and should stop! It is a practice which is one of bullying, in that it permits the City to act irresponsibly and often not do its chartered duty to protect the health and safety of our Citizens. This practice fosters an unresponsive and reactive government, rather than a proactive and engaging government of the people. This practice and policy should end.

Portsmouth accepts funds and property taken by Civil Forfeiture by the Federal Government as largess and grant to the City. This practice of Civil Forfeiture and Equitable Sharing are obscene and tramples on the rights the Citizen's protections under the Bill of Rights. The seizure of property, civilly without warrant or justification, and in particular, where no criminal charges are made or made but not proven, turns police into gangsters and thugs and government into racketeers. In some cases, goods and cash are obtained which were clearly associated with criminality, which allows for Criminal Forfeiture. But where property is seized without justification from wholly innocent individuals, not charged with crimes - this is an injustice. Portsmouth should not take funds or property from any Citizen by Civil Forfeiture and should not participate in any Federal Government under Equitable Sharing. No funds, equipment or property should be accepted by the City unless a detailed certified Federal or State report accompanies each offering outlining the circumstances of the Federal Government's acquisition. The City should discriminate for itself, if those grants are ethical to accept, and reject them if they are tainted. The City should not be lured into taking dirty money, nor should it condone or promote the abuse and theft of our protected rights by the Federal Government

Over the years City officials have misused retirement plans, by switching jobs just before retirement, and playing a shell game, to allow themselves to qualify for retirement under those significantly higher paying plans. This is sneaky and unethical and hurts those who have paid into those richer plans for many years. The City workers who have contributed to those higher benefit plans have little recourse. This practice soaks the resources and profitability of the higher paying plan, and strips and undermines the weaker plans and makes them even weaker. This practice or acceptance should not be permitted and anyone in Management who attempts to take this kind of action or promotes this kind of abuse should be sanctioned and disciplined severely. The Council should guard against this kind of practice and make sure that the Manager does not allow it to occur. If the manager promotes or laterally moves an employee into another position at the end of his career, to allow that employ to change and reap the benefits of another retirement plan, the Manager should be disciplined.

The State Code gives absolute control and responsibility of "all" right-of-ways to Cities within their boundaries for the health and safety of the Citizens. It also allows for the regulation by the City of



private property for the health and safety of the population. It is unethical for the City to fail to maintain the right-of-ways or impose practices and threaten Citizens or try to make Citizens maintain property which is clearly the responsibility of the City. This practice is prohibited under State Code and Court precedence. Cities cannot delegate those responsibilities to others unless they are contracted to do so, nor is the City permitted to shirk its liabilities unless it is in the performance or obligations of contracted work. Portsmouth has a liability and a chartered duty to uphold its responsibilities and should not stop maintenance or pass off maintenance to private Citizens to work around its responsibilities under the law. When any government intimidates or threatens ignorant or unknowing Citizens to comply with unenforceable and improper mandates - that is tyrannical and abusive thuggery and such threats are more like that of gangster extortionist. Portsmouth should not be engaged in such unethical practices and they should be stopped.

It is not ethical for the City to have cozy relationships with local law firms that are on retainer to quasi-governmental shells (like PRHA). Nor should they hire lawyers out of such firms as loaners for the City Attorney's office, while those same firms sponsor and house private non-profit business and economic development organizations which are closely linked with PRHA, City officials, State legislators, local bankers and have businesses dealings with the City.

The City should have an arms distance relation with all firms and corporations wanting to develop in the City. While the City should be open to outside proposals for development it should weigh such development ideas against the peoples wishes in the Comprehensive Plan, required by the State every ten years and the Districts Master plans.

The City and PRHA should always consult with property owners and stakeholders to determine what they want or would like to do with their own tax paying assets and neighborhoods. Their desires and vision should be taken into consideration for any projected thoughts of development. The City should abide by the First Amendment of the Virginia Constitution and the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution regarding the lawful taking of property and always act in spirit of respecting those protected rights. In doing so, the City and PRHA should only take property or acquire it, when there is a clear and defined public use requirement. The City should not allow properties to become blighted due to planned negligence and disregard by City Inspectors. Properties and neighborhoods should not be "red lined" and allowed to deteriorate for City or PRHA future interests, or so that they can be seized under the guise of blight for land banking or the development of others. This is not only unethical but also illegal! The Manager should be held liable for benign neglect, where the inaction or action in Code and Law enforcement is targeted to create artificial images of blight so that properties can be shelled through for purchase and develop by other private parties. Agencies responsible for such conditions and failure to enforce the Code or Law should be charged criminally and their civil rights of sovereign immunity stripped for such criminal behavior. Shell agencies such as PRHA or other entities should be criminally charged if they so misuse funds, obtained by the City from the Federal Government in such a manner or conspire in such practices.

The City and PRHA should not re-zone properties or close or open streets without proper public notice and required signage, as required by City Planning, just because interested parties to such actions have powerful political or business influence. Nor should there be seizure of neighboring private property, resulting from threats by business owners, to leave the City - just so the complaining property owners can acquire their neighbors land. This is illegal under the Virginia State Constitution and the U.S.



Supreme Court, which has long held that the government cannot take property from A to give to B. Not only is this illegal it is outrageously unethical. This kind of practice should not be going on in Portsmouth. Furthermore, outside non-governmental organizations with governmental links should not be used as shells for PRHA or the City to acquire or put together properties, nor should PRHA act as a shell to acquire parcels for such organizations either. The Federal Supreme Court has ruled that non-governmental organizations formulated to pass through or shell government acquisitions and Federal funding, should be looked at as extensions of governmental organizations and held liable and accountable for their actions to the same standards as governments.

Where the City has acquired property using Federal funds under Community Development Block Grants or other such programs and there is a stated promise to develop such properties within three years and that property is turned over to PRHA or another entity and such development does not occur within that time frame, the City should seize the property under emanate domain and auction it off immediately. While there is no statute of limitations for criminal offenses in the Virginia Code, there are limitations under the Federal Code and likewise under the Virginia and Federal Codes for civil remedies. The ploy of creating three-year performance objectives, with the intention to do nothing but to outlive statutes of limitations, permitting PRHA to hold properties for decades undeveloped and un-taxed without civil or criminal recourse is a conspiracy to defraud. Such actions circumvent the spirit of the Federal Laws and the intent of Congress that awarded funds for the taking of such properties and should not be condoned. Such actions and in-actions damage the good name of Portsmouth, cost our Citizens revenues and create blighted conditions through underdevelopment and under usage of property within the City.

While it is financially and ethically important to utilize local businesses, engineers, architects, artists and contractors in Portsmouth projects, it is unethical, inefficient, improper and not beneficial in the long run, to also not search out the best talent that the City can afford. To look outside our own boundaries assures that we find and use the best resources and talent available at the best price for the best product or service. We must not only look inward to satisfy our needs and desires, but reach out to stimulate our growth. This will assure that we do not become inbred in our human resources. None-the-less, the City should promote our own talent outside our own boundaries, so that those going forward carry the message from this place out into to the world that our qualities are rich and that we have much to offer. We should not discount or disrespect our own native talents and utilize, support and promote it whenever possible.

## **EDUCATION:**

The School Superintendent should be accountable to the budget authorized by the Council and return any unspent allocated funds to the Council for re-authorization. Such overages should not be utilized for non-intended purpose without consent. The authorized School Budget should not be considered as a slop chest. If the School Superintendent finds that there is a surplus and he needs funds in another area he should request of the council redirection of funds, as soon as discovered, to be decided upon by the Council, at their discretion and direction. Such unused or surplus funds should be placed in escrow and book marked for immediate return pending direction from the Council. The practice of imprecise budgeting should not become a routine or regular practice. A cap or limit for excesses or overruns should be established based on a percentage or dollar amount which sets a flag for report to the Council. Not with standing, any excess or unspent amounts should return to the Council at the end of the budget

year, except in cases where orders or serves are approved and pending. The experience of knowing where there are over budgeted expenses and under budgeted needs at the end of a fiscal year allows for better and more meaningful planning and budgeting in the future for both the School Board and the City Council.



School children at all grade levels should have mandated the wearing of uniforms determined by their individual schools to encourage pride, promote classroom discipline and moreover cut down the clothing cost for parents. Uniforms reduce economic and clothing style competition between students. Uniforms put the poorer students on an even playing field with the more affluent students. Uniform conformity will help identify students that are truant and not in school. Smart looking uniforms will allow students to concentrate on what is important in school - knowledge, learning and self-disciplined behavior. School uniforms will help families burdened with the heavy expenses of raising children. This is very important because the per capita income of our

Portsmouth Citizens is the lowest in Hampton Roads. The City needs to do everything in its power to strengthen families, and family values in the community and insure that our public school students can stay focused on achievement and our schools can maintain discipline such that our scholars will succeed in life, make Portsmouth stronger, and make Portsmouth proud.

Cell phones should be absolutely prohibited to students in the schools and violations should be severely sanctioned. Cell phones and cameras should only be allowed in schools on special occasions and for field trips.



School books should not be provided to students for free without controls, but should be inspected for wear on return at the end of the year and students charged if wear is excessive or books are marked up. This cuts down on the very significant cost of books to the Citizens and places the cost of schooling more on parents with students rather than to the taxpayers without children in school. Students paying for books, taking care of them and having to turn them in at the end of the year encourages personal responsibility and stewardship and discourages damage and loss of books.

Technologies should be strengthened in the schools and testing of students for mental and physical aptitude, manual dexterity, handwriting, drawing and musical abilities, cognition and memory should take place in middle school. Based on resulting scores and aptitudes, counselors should categorize students according to their abilities to encourage their talents. The public schools should not focus just on academic and college preparatory courses and tracks. A separate Secondary school program, geared to the mastery of manual skills and engineering technologies should be established. This school should not be treated, promoted nor considered a lesser education than the college prep High School, but rather one that is geared to hands on experience, backed by a scientific, artistic and didactic practicum which is expressed by experiential science wedded to manual skills. Here training would be focused on those individuals that show real aptitude with their hands and exhibit potential for mastering materials with dexterity. The curriculum would promote a well-rounded technical and vocational differentiated experience that would integrate solid knowledge of basic math, algebra, trigonometry, calculus,



geometry, computer language programming, database programming and spreadsheet formulations, physics and engineering principles, bread board electronics, wood shop, machine shop, board drafting, robotics, mechanical engineering, glass blowing, ceramics, computer graphics, printmaking and graphic design. Students in the technical engineering school could be awarded different diplomas depending on the emphasis of their curriculum. Students enrolled in the Governors Magnet School for the Arts or Sciences could cross train or transfer in or out of the school. Advanced placement could be achieved by taking courses at the Portsmouth Campus of TCC. The training at this school would provide the successful graduate an ability to enter into a skilled apprenticeship in industry or small business, go to TCC for additional specialized skills training and pre-college academic work or enter the military with a strong skills set that would guarantee top MOS placement and rapid advancement. JROTC in the Engineering Technologies School would be encouraged, as it would provide an open path to jobs for graduates and provide a leg-up immediate rank/rate promotion to JROTC graduates entering the military. Today, early entry into high tech and skills careers and taking advantage of ongoing lifelong training advantages, in an ever evolving technical environment, can prove more rewarding and provide a far more rapid advancement than a college bound career track. It can also cost less for post-Secondary schooling in the long run, as the training costs are far less. Often training is paid for by employers or the military. The skills that a Technical Engineering program can produce for the industrial and production needs of Portsmouth would be significant to our economy and long term survival. Engineering Technologies programs will strengthen the Portsmouth TCC campus curriculum and bring economic and enhanced career training benefits to Portsmouth. Future industrial needs will be required in engineering, design, innovation and rapid prototyping for production. Portsmouth, as a community, has traditionally had a strong foundation in technology and it should continue to support this heritage and tradition and build on our past accomplishments and skills.

The health care industry is one of the fastest growing fields in the region and the nation. It encompasses everything from technical, administrative and nursing careers, to the general practitioner and the medical specialist and choices from surgery to psychiatry. Students should be screened and counseled and programs developed for career tracks in the medical field which can segue into programs at the Portsmouth TCC Campus, Norfolk State and at Eastern Virginia Medical School. If a student wants to go on to one of these specialized programs they should be prepared by their education in the Portsmouth Schools to hit the ground running and move to the head of the class rapidly in those programs.

All students in Biology classes in the Portsmouth Schools should do dissection, skeletal and anatomical studies beginning in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. They should be able to identify the parts of the specimens and should examine various tissue samples under the microscope. Students should draw anatomical studies from life.

Geography and Geology classes should be integrated with an emphasis on an understanding of the economics of natural resources at the global level.

All chemistry students should be engaged in practical experiments and not just book learning and memorizing of the periodic table.

High school science classes should have lab classes at least once every week or two.

Classes in the physical sciences such as Physics, Geometry, Algebra, Trigonometry, Calculus, Engineering Drafting, Architectural Drafting, Electronics, Chemistry, Robotics, Computer Logic, Programming or Design should be grouped as a core academic tract that will prepare students for those disciplines, whether in a College Degree path or a Technical Engineering career tract. Students should be based as necessary to the Technical Engineering or High School to take courses within their tailored curriculum. Students in the college degree track should also be required to learn practical skills at the Technical Engineering school such as wood working, metal working, machine tool work, forging and welding. Book knowledge is inadequate for anyone pursuing a career in the physical sciences. Likewise, Computer Aided Drafting or Computer Graphic Design do not suffice for knowledge, experience and skills learned from board drafting, drawing and rendering by hand with pencil and pen. Electronics, Computer sciences, and engineering classes are inadequate if only theory is learned. They all require hands on training.

All grammar school students should be become versed in Latin and Greek in their first three years, as Thomas Jefferson envisioned in his Virginia Education Bill, for the same reasons he postulated. Young children learn languages at this age and humans find it harder to learn languages as they grow older. The learning of Greek and Latin provides the root to our English language and also serves as the backbone of the Romance languages which become easier to learn once the foundations of these more difficult languages are mastered. Jefferson proposed a public school system for the purpose of educating the population in civic responsibility and democracy. That was, and I agree that it is only justification for such a public endeavor, in which all citizens are being taxed. Jefferson felt that in learning Greek and Latin the population would become acquainted with the history and literature of the ancient democracies. I concur in that belief. Much of our crime today is caused by the break down in family values and family units, a lack of discipline in the classrooms, a loss of civic responsibility, a decline in public manners, and the failure of our citizens to have a solid knowledge of history and law. Education and educated individuals in this nation are not regarded with the same respect that they were in our past or still are in other civilized nations. This condition is in large part due to our public school systems failure to teach our students the core values and responsibilities of democracy. A solid understanding of civic responsibility needs to be bolstered in our public school system today.



School yards should be better landscaped with both plants and trees as this provides a softening, inviting and endearing environment to students and creates shade, buffers noise, and beautifies neighborhoods. If a school looks beautiful and inviting and projects an image of softness in a harsh world, it is a place where students will want to come to rather than escape from. A beautiful school engenders pride, self-respect and respect for the building, its inhabitants, the grounds and the purpose of the building - a sanctuary for learning. Environment is very important to making learning enjoyable and the memory lingers on into the old age of the alumni as fond memories.

Recently a standard plan for elementary schools has been used throughout the system based on a single architectural design. This model should be variegated so that there is a distinctive and unique charm to each structure but at the same time a continuity in overall style. This adds character to the communities and neighborhoods while not making major differences that might create significant cost disparities.



We should discourage a cookie cutter, production line image in school architecture.

## **SPORTS & RECREATION:**

The public school gymnasiums should be open after school and on weekends and during the summer for students. Parks and Recreation should manage the facilities in coordination and in cooperation with the schools to relieve the costs and burden of specialized Recreation Centers throughout the City. Planned programs and usage schedules should be established. Where possible older students should be hired to



help supervise younger children in the summer. Laid off teachers in the summer should be hired to manage such recreation whenever possible at the schools.

The City should reach out and encourage the development of Boys and Girls Clubs, and Scouting in the community along with the promotion of JROTC programs in the schools. School facilities should be made available to such organizations, after hours, on weekends and in the summer to promote such positive organizations in the community.

The City should provide its playing fields and recreation grounds to be open and utilized for neighborhood soccer, basketball and baseball activities. Little Leagues and sponsored youth sports clubs should be encouraged by the school system and allowed to integrate their activities using school outdoor recreation facilities.

Schools throughout the City at the elementary and middle school level should have gymnastics programs, as they are non-aggressive, builds individual self-assurance, improves balance, agility and muscle strength. Gymnasts are best at the middle school age because of the mass, weight to height ratios of children at this point in life. All middle and high schools should offer and promote wrestling, as it builds self-confidence, balance, strength, physical speed. It is a competitive sport in which the two opponents are equally matched in weight. Both of these sports create camaraderie, fair play, endurance, muscle development, self-control, and respect for others while teaching students how to use their personal talents and the qualities of the physical attributes of their own unique bodies to best advantage as they mature into adulthood. Also both of these sports are less costly than some other organized sports.

Soccer, baseball and basketball should be promoted and sponsored in the public schools and teams encouraged and developed at the Neighborhood Rec Centers city wide, both for students and for adults. They teach cooperation, sportsmanship, mastery of individual talent and fit within an organization. They encourage a motivating winning attitude in participants and fans. They also can develop neighborhood and civic unity and pride and bring neighborhoods together. At the same time they are less costly on participants and sponsors to support in equipment and maintenance, while they also put physically and mentally developing youth at far less risk of severe or catastrophic injury than other more aggressive sports.

A City wide plan to develop indoor-outdoor swimming pools throughout the City at the High Schools and the Recreation Centers should be established. All students in the City should learn how to swim and swimming sports should be encouraged in the Public School System as it is a comprehensive exercise, builds self-confidence, is a nonviolent but aggressive competitive individual or group sport.



Swimming pools will provide local activities for both parents and their children, in the summertime in particular, to relax and have fun together and strengthen neighborhood communities and public sociable environments. Swimming pools can also create safe and fun neighborhood competition and engagement in organized swimming sports.

The City should work with the Boy and Girl Scouts and the American Red Cross and the Coast Guard Auxiliary to facilitate the means to encourage swimming lessons, life-saving, CPR Training and water and boat safety. The population of the City over the last fifty years has lost its interest, with the advent of the automobile, in fully utilizing the Elizabeth River as our natural swimming hole and for boating. The schools, Parks and Recreation and the Scouts and the Engineering Technology School and TCC Portsmouth Campus should be encouraged to promote small boat building and clubs for rowing and sailing. Facilities such as Swimming Point, Hoffer Wildlife Refuge, City Park and Scott's Creek should be seen as places to develop small boat neighborhood groups and competitive organizations in the City. Waterfront facilities in conjunction with public boat ramps should provide park like spaces with Bar-B-Que stands, trees and landscaping to encourage riverfront activities. Public engagement, like this, will distinguish neighborhoods, create crosstown competitions and bring together our Citizens in friendly rivalries and neighborliness in wholesome activities that encourage family and civic values and distinguish our community as a leader in Hampton Roads.

#### **PUBLIC SAFETY:**

Public safety starts with public values. It starts in the family, and is reinforced by the church, schools, fraternal clubs, friends of mutual interest and organizations. Those values are manifested in our civic leagues, political parties, volunteer outreach, community giving and participation and in public service engagement. The public safety is at the pinnacle of commitment and responsibility for the citizen at whatever level of government involvement. The glue that binds these forces together is the belief that life is worth living, that things can be accomplished in this life, that achievement is gained by learning and effort, right is superior to wrong, justice will prevail and the faith that no one is an island unto himself, but through human collaboration, interaction, help and outward giving, the individual can transform his natural survival instincts into stronger forces of collective superiority, strength and shared values. In the face of privations, despair and hopelessness, this glue can overcome self-indulgent solitude which leads to narcissism, greed, psychopathic superiority, despair and evil. But collective forces can also multiply evil just as they can spawn goodness. It is therefore important that focus in society is placed on developing the minds of individual citizens to be capable of discerning right from wrong and who will avoid the titillating sensation of the more immediate but ephemeral reward and chose the morally superior path and lead others to its safer and more constructive positive outcome, which most often rests quietly unseen over the horizon. Society must bring into check the deviation from the true course that pulls the individual from a correct bearing and can land the unwary onto the shoals of ruin. The wayward path must be caught early before the magnitude of error overwhelms the possibility of correction. But the guiding hand of correction must not over-steer the helm least it be caught up and broached in a swallowing sea of helplessness. Evil must be plucked away from evil before it becomes a growing tangle, a rat's nest that cannot be unwound. Where the gnarled and wayward threads of deviation can be combed straight and realigned they should be worked diligently until there is restoration in the lay of the moral fiber. Then those more resilient fibers, retaining the memory of their fugitive inerrant way, wrapped into the coiling strands of society become the historical experience of guiding rectitude for future generations that pull the line straight and true. The values,

expectations and fulfillment in work, driven by achievement, must be taught and ingrained into our society from an early age so that we do not become indolent, nor become tempted by the short cuts in life taken at the expense of others. We must ensure that our society is taught the value, meaning and rewards of work and of the self-satisfaction gained from it, beyond monetary reward.

Street lighting should be increased on the major secondary thoroughfares of Elm Avenue, Deep Creek Blvd. and Turnpike Road in the older sections of the City. Sidewalks should be laid on these roads where there are none and they should be standardized.

NEAT patrols should be increased and the auxiliary police force increased to permit two man patrols. If a Police Academy is developed Police interns should ride with police officers as part of their training, which will strengthen police presence.

The use, possession or distribution of hard drugs (Heroin, Crack, Cocaine, Meth-Amphetamine, Barbiturates and other powerful psychoactive prescription or addictive mind numbing drugs) are not victim-less crimes that have little effect on anyone but the user. This is foolish political propaganda that has been foisted upon the public to delude our nation. These drugs in particular are associated with the murders and torture of tens of thousands of Mexicans, Central and South Americans and the destabilization and undermining of our democratic neighbors to the south. These drugs uproot and destroy families. They are the principle cause for the 11 million illegal immigrants that have crossed our border. Heroin is the chief product of Afghanistan and undermines all our recent efforts and sacrifices in trying to save that nation from religious and war-lord tyranny. Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam are likewise emerging nations and economically and politically they are the super highway for the opium production and trade in the world. Our nation's hard drug demand fuels this trade and slaps the memory of our efforts and losses in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia in the face. Our nation's consumption of heroin undermines democracy and ensures corruption in governments of many nations, and creates international instability and tyranny. India and China (nations composing half the world's population) are exporting the raw ingredients, by the container load, for the production of Meth-Amphetamine in Mexico. Hard drugs find their way into the veins of Americans and along the way they make the murdering scoundrels of the Mexican cartels, the Mexican Mafia in the jails of California and the Hell's Angles rich, along with Israeli, Italian and Russian mobsters. Every community in this country needs to address this matter, because it is our American demand that drives the greed in the third world, which buys, suppresses, and destroys democracy, kills their struggling people, distorts their economies and tramples on human rights. The sin of this tragedy is upon our American shoulders. We often think that the greatest part of the death relating to drug violence is ours alone to bear, in our own urban ghettos. In fact, the greatest sufferers from this disaster are in Latin America. Hard drugs are endemic to the human slave trade and prostitution throughout the world and they are at the core of political corruption, extortion and death, shot into the veins of Americans every day. America is currently in the grips of a heroin epidemic sweeping from the Great Lakes and down the East Coast. It is viciously raising its evil head in Portsmouth and it must be stopped with an aggressive deterrent effort. Our City must unite in combating this pariah and determine what is the most effective means for thwarting its efforts to grip our community, and what means should we use to prevent and rain in this plague. There are no easy solutions to these hard drugs, which on the one hand





create a physical hold, and on the other, a mental grasp on users that may take addicts decades to overcome their bitter-sweet cravings, if they do not first succumb to an unexpected but certain grip of death. Stopping the use of these hard drugs and keeping them out of our neighborhoods must be placed on a high agenda for our government, because they are all at the heart of so many other crimes, violence and death wherever and whenever they take hold of a society

Maintaining the public safety, whether it is health, fire protection or policing requires financial commitment and it must always be the highest priority of government. Our City government has not met their obligation to our people and this must change. Just compensation is important, as is efficient policy that reduces costs and maximizes effectiveness. Our former City Managers and the Council have created discord in those who serve the community, while they have put our community at risk. This must not be. Law and order is a prerequisite to all other things civil in a society.

Technology and machines reduce manpower and are often cost effective because they do not engender the added burden of expenses associated with personnel such as workmen's compensation, health insurance, retirement matching funds, Social Security payments, child care payments, sick leave and maternity leave payments, etc. But machines cannot testify in court, cannot separate domestic arguments, determine who is at fault, chase suspects, witness crimes, arrest people nor carry them off to the city jail. Similarly, physical human interaction is necessary for health and fire protection. A city's social protections are inherently labor intensive. While Cities attempt to be more efficient through mechanization and technology in these matters, the scope of effectiveness is limited by the improvements and practical effectiveness in the field. Technologies and productive efficient equipment that are proactive are most beneficial in minimizing labor needs and in putting the right people in the right place at the right time, with the right equipment and in the right numbers. Such things as better database management, selective video monitoring of high crime locations, co-ordination of technology with neighborhood businesses, an expansion of forensic equipment and the outsourcing of forensic needs, better street lighting, more practical and efficient motor vehicles, and the implementation of GPS police tracking and monitoring can utilize technologies to improve human efficiency and effectiveness. An array of available policies and equipment can be used in making apprehensions which permit standardized progression of enforcement protocols that may be employed to gradually and selectively elevate procedures from the most benign necessary to the most lethal. This will help assure that enforcement is carried out at the most effective level with the least effort and force necessary. No arrest is ever successful unless a conviction can be made and a fair and effective judgment rendered with meaningful sanctions. That job rests on four parties - the Detective, the Forensics Analyst, the Commonwealth Attorney and the Judge. The City has control over only the first two links in this chain. The Detective is very much reliant on the abilities and the capabilities of the Forensic Analyst. This is often the weakest link in a successful prosecution. It is also where technology can really make a difference and where focused manpower expansion can move cases to successful prosecution much faster. Selective outsourcing can also accomplish the same thing if employed effectively and the chain of custody of evidence is secure. Improving the manpower and equipment needs of the Police Department can improve the justice system by providing for the better satisfaction of a "speedy trial" and assure convictions. Detective work is crucial to making arrests and getting convictions as timeliness is everything in pulling together evidence and witnesses. Increasing the Detective staff will greatly improve this situation and help to better assure justice. While the Mayor and Council have no



say over the Judges and Commonwealth Attorney, they can voice their sense of the Council if they feel that justice is not being served, if either cases are not being handled with adequate convictions and sentencing, or are too harsh or lenient. The Council can and should speak up for the people and justice in the name of protecting Citizen rights and their health, safety and property and to assure that the City Code is being upheld to theirs and the people's satisfaction. Moreover, the Council and the Mayor should set examples, as stewards of the public trust, as leaders of public morality and civic responsibility, to promote good citizenship and dispel criminality. The lessening of crime is not merely a function of increasing a police force, raising their pay or providing them more tactical weaponry. The most important factor rests upon the shoulders of the public to not commit crimes, not tolerate criminal activity, a willing responsibility to report crime and an understanding that government and the police, in particular, are not "them against us", but the voice and strong arm of the people, which acts on the people's behalf and represents their will to uphold the laws made by the people. Therefore, the root to improved safety in the community is, first and foremost, Citizen education, support and loyalty, which is the prime function of the public school system. But at the social apex is each member of Council and Mayor who must be the examples of leadership that define the standard for the community to which they govern in the name of and by the will of the people.

First responders in the City should be fully staffed and funded to meet the obligations of the government to protect the health and safety of the people. The Civil Defense plan should be reviewed and rail should be taken into consideration for community evacuations. Clearly automobile evacuation from Hampton Roads in the case of a regional catastrophe would not only be inadequate, but would be a disaster of significant magnitude, which would significantly impact military logistical operations. This speaks to the important need for a reliable high speed train and inter-modal connecting rail system, for not only Portsmouth, but the entire region. The Mayor should call for an *ad hoc* Committee to take an audit and fresh look at the current and projected readiness of Portsmouth for short term catastrophic response and long term impacts that will affect our environment due to rising sea level, an increasing population, automobile congestion, constrained highways, communications, power and water infrastructure, condition and adequacy of prepositioned emergency civil defense equipment and supplies. The Committee should consider whether the emergency equipment on hand, used on a routine basis in conjunction with other possible sources (other cities, federal government, National Guard) will satisfy our potential catastrophic needs or whether we may have to reconfigure our equipment, logistics and contingency plans. That review should be studied by the Council and Manager and be shared regionally.



## **TOURISM:**

The importance of tourism in Portsmouth and to Virginia cannot be overstated. This \$23 Billion industry is vital to the image and private and public purse of our Commonwealth and the City. In the last four years we have lost over half of our Downtown restaurants and businesses which took thirty long years to develop and cultivate. This loss to the City can only be considered in the millions of dollars. The City has turned empty buildings in our Downtown into museums and tourist attractions which have kept whole blocks alive and given our Downtown revitalization. Other buildings it has occupied to prevent them from being empty. But the City involvement in those projects has been



costly and these investments cannot stand on their own without other surrounding venues for meals and entertainment, retail shops and stores supporting and pulling whole business neighborhoods up together. The new Midtown Tunnel with its exorbitant tolls is the principle cause of rapid abandonment of our business districts and the collapse of businesses that have been in our City, in some cases, for almost a century. This is a disaster. The second Midtown tunnel was in the works for nearly thirty years. The blame for this situation must fall not on this Mayor and Council alone, but must be born also by other Councils and Managers, going back decades who did not plan accordingly. Did not stand up for the interests of Portsmouth first, in regional transportation planning. Did not work with the Federal government, nor did they anticipate the problems that would accompany this change, when they brought 4000 new employees into our Downtown, creating a chronic traffic problem. Did not re-establish a trolley system in the Downtown twenty-five years ago when costs would have been most advantageous and affordable. The City, along with PRHA did not recognize, that increasing density in the Downtown by building apartments with or without off street parking would significantly increase the traffic congestion and impact downtown parking, while the disposable incomes of those renters would be less than that of property owners. Did not insist that the new tunnel be built to accommodate light rail. Did not insist that tractor trailers hauling interstate commerce, through the tunnels, should be required to pay a substantial toll to offset the burden on daily automobile commuters, nor did the City fight to see that the second phase of the Norfolk Tide Light Rail was focused on the Sentara to NOB link instead of the Downtown to Virginia Beach City Center link. In the more recent years our lodging and food revenues have grown proportionally, but that figure may be skewed by franchise restaurant sales on Fredrick Blvd. and by deli take-out sales from Kroger and Walmart. None-the-less, these numbers would should have grown if our Downtown restaurants had not closed their doors. What must be considered is the fact that franchise restaurants on Fredrick Blvd and in the Downtown have survived at the expense of our small family run and independently owned Downtown restaurants, which have not been able to compete and closed their doors. This is not only a travesty to City revenues, but a serious assault on the character, charm and uniqueness of our City. The loss of democratic engagement in the state of the community by small businesses is a vital civic support factor in which national corporations and franchises fail to participate. When you have the same restaurants and hotels throughout the nation, the traveler may find comfort in familiarity in another city in finding branded names and corporate logos, but lacks the motivation to even travel as an experience, if the end result of his journey is the same conformity, homogenized and antiseptic offerings of the environment he finds at home. Diversity, uniqueness, surprise and variety drives tourism, not the gray sameness of the asphalt parking lot, the big box or garish fast food establishments encased in brightly lit plastic signage. Tourism, in Cities is very much a pedestrian experience, built on planned focus but serendipitous encounters. The City's business losses in the Downtown are miserable. These losses, while certainly the result of many previous Managers and political leaders and fault must be laid heavily on the shoulders of our current Mayor who admittedly knew nothing about regional transportation and went off to his first Hampton Roads Regional Transportation Committee and rather than stand up for Portsmouth and our interests, returned to the City and reported that "I guess we'll have to get along and go along". He sold out the interests of the City and we have had to pay the price ever since. While meals and lodging taxes in Portsmouth have maintained their approximate same growth over the last three years, our admissions tax revenues (which are the highest in the tourism sector at 10%) have dropped in a declining slope. This matter should be addressed by a select committee to determine the causation. Certainly the closing down of Downtown businesses have had some bearing on this decline or lack of significant growth.

Willet Hall, the Ntelos Pavilion, and the Commodore Theater are venues that need to be analyzed in

regard to strengthening their attractiveness and the City's tax cash flow. The study should review the contract with the entertainment provider to Ntelos. The people need to know, to what degree the imposition of high tunnel fares has impacted attendances and calculate those monetary losses to the City. The revenues these sites take in directly; are only a part of the greater impact they provide the community's economy. The numbers of people who visit our Downtown, and the multiplier effect they contribute to tourist dollars, being spent in the City, are important to sustaining our tourist environment but also impact our tax revenues and very importantly offset residential property taxes.

While the City has been guided by the Comprehensive Plan, first called for by the people during the time of City Manager Robert House, which envisioned an Annapolis and Alexandria like waterfront and historic restorations, in an effort to promote tourism, it has been carried out, principally as lip service. Repeated Comprehensive Plans and planning consultancies (costing the City in excess of \$500,000) have hammered home the same refrain, but in reality the real forces that have driven the actual agenda have been the bitter sweet sounds of money that has gone to bankers and developers. The florid images of tourism, quaintness, town character and history have been used only to delude a naive and uncomprehending public, while those behind the scenes carried out their own intentions and greedy machinations of insensitive vision, which lacked creativity and quality. Overall, what has driven this City, has been the desire to dip into the lucre of Federal funding sources, rather than local citizen desires. This must be changed! Portsmouth must put its interests and our market distinctions first regionally and in seeking funds from the State or Federal government. We must protect our heritage and preserve our assets that are the unique identifiers of what make up our community. We must strengthen those resources by creating assets of high value, comparable to the best from our past, that will in the future be considered as worthy fingerprints of our own era that can be cherished in the memories of future generations. Tourism is built upon an attraction to the novel, the historical, the Avant guard, the different, the adventuresome, the masterful and the beautiful. Tourism is not supported by the average, the mundane or the mediocre. It looks for the unique, the exciting, the different, the awesome and the outstanding! If we are foolish enough not to build and create to such a standard, we will only hammer down the coffin lid of our own perdition. We must aim high if we want to stand out as the hub and vital center of Hampton Roads. We must marshal our efforts, plan our strategies and pursue the vision of our future with dynamism.



The Mayor should appoint an *ad hoc* committee to assess the various sources of tourism, now and in the future. The events, venues, and reasons tourist visit Portsmouth should be analyzed. Prospective new sources of tourism and attractions should be brain stormed. The scope of the committee should not be only Downtown, but should encompass other sections of the City also. Events should be looked at from a seasonal perspective and consideration given to an annual agenda. This committee should be independent and not led by one department, but departments under the Manager should be at the disposal of the committee to assist in providing input, facts and help in research, historical perspective, current programs and future plans, etc. (i.e., Economic Development, Parks & Recreation, Planning, Museums) The committee should produce an independent formal report to be studied by the Manager and Council to help develop a short term and a long Tourism strategy. The report should be compiled by the City Staff. The Council should ask the Manager for an independent staff report and be given an opportunity to testify and present their report and professional assessment, with their own ideas and

proposals and their practical critique of the Committee report. The Council should then ask for public input and deliberate on the entire matter and try to develop a comprehensive Tourism plan. This might very well entail a permanent Tourism Committee and a staff member to liaison and carry out the will of the Council and Committee. A Tourism Committee could be meaningful and helpful, as it might serve as a hub in a many spoked wheel of diverse events throughout the year. Such a permanent Committee would be vital in coordinating the many community groups and neighborhoods in the City that might participate in the promotion of tourism and neighborhood activities. The Committee could create *ad hoc* sub committees that would be temporary or seasonal, to work on specific functions or events. This Committee could be a dynamic force in activating communities and organizations throughout the City to work towards common goals, and socialize with other groups in such a way that the City would come alive through unified teamwork and neighborliness. In this regard it could be envisioned that an annual Portsmouth Events Calendar might be published on the web that could be accessed by tourist and our Citizens to link our citizens together and coordinate activities, promote events and stimulate civic energy and act as both a megaphone for the City's tourism and daily events and as a switchboard for participants in such events. Links on the site could take viewers out to local restaurants, lodgings, museums, venue promotion details, boating and marina accommodations, etc. This site should be engineered to gather data and feedback that could be retained in a relational database that would allow for departmental querying that will permit the gathering of information for "targeting to the market and marketing to the target" practices, performance and effectiveness review, and follow up strategic studies.



Portsmouth has a rich railroad history and many people, particularly in Port Norfolk were involved in various railroads involved with the City. Our Railroad Museum of Virginia could be enhanced and expanded if located at the previously proposed High Speed Rail terminal at the CSX Rail head. This location would be a great attraction and should certainly be better attended by commuters, then the location of the few cars now isolated in the Downtown. This would also free up the current track to be used by trolleys to bring passengers up to the Ntelos Pavilion from the Main Terminal and take them to parking garages and the business district after concerts. Multiple birds could be killed with one stone by such a move.

An arts district should be developed in the 900-1000 blocks of High Street that would help focus attention and development of the Uptown Business District that would encourage back fill development to Effingham Street. (This is precisely what happened when Prison Square was developed in the 600 block of High Street instead of turning it into a parking lot as PRHA and the City had planned.) An area where Artisans could produce their wares like they do in Jamestown and Williamsburg and be visited by tourist watching them work, would be a real economic draw for the City!

Mobile restaurants should be banned in the City as they compete with brick and mortar small businesses. At the same time push carts should be encouraged as they promote an engaging pedestrian sidewalk and their activity encourages shoppers and tourists to be more leisurely, engaging and lingering. This helps stimulate collective mindset and neighborhood street activity.

Many Downtown heritage buildings have courtyards at the rear of their structures or the potential to turn their rear lot or backyard empty space into courtyards. The City should encourage this as an architectural characteristic of the City that can draw attention to our Downtown for what we should develop as a unique urban planning and architectural feature. These courtyards could be used for

outdoor spill-over spaces for interior shop events, as tea and coffee gardens or sculpture gardens for art galleries.

Economic Development should work with Norfolk's Half Moon Terminals, local tourist vessels, TRT, our Museums and restaurants and the cruise ship industry to develop tourist itineraries, packages and discounts for excursions to Portsmouth for their passengers. The department should also promote our hotels for arrive-early or stay-over passengers of the cruise ships and promote travel excursions to explore our local sites as an extension of their cruising experience.



The Flag Pole at the foot of High Street should be replaced with a ships mast and yard arm and the Four Flags of the City's history should all be flying there to distinguish our City in the tourist market and help promote the importance of the Shipyard Museum.

The City should allow for the transit berthing of yachts along the sea wall on a regular basis and should install metered water and power stations for such vessels. The City needs to encourage prolonged stop-overs of inter-coastal transits to its utmost and vessels should be given blue ribbon treatment to encourage the nautical atmosphere of our City and promote our cultural and economic amenities.

The City should clear the title for the land beneath the Confederate Monument, at the corner of High and Court Street, and sign over a deed to the Sons of the Confederacy fee simple. Even though no title has been currently found in the record for a land transfer, this does not mean that it was not the assured intention of the former City Fathers that the land was given intentionally or unintentionally to the Daughters of the Confederacy for the purpose of erecting the monument. After all these years there would be no sound argument or disputation of value that the Sons of the Confederacy, the current owners, could face, if they were to quick claim on the property beneath the monument by peaceable possession. On the other hand, the land could be considered as part of the right-of-way, in which case the City is required by State Law to maintain it for the health and safety of the public. Something, it has always done to my knowledge, as I have witnessed its care and maintenance by the City in the past. In this case the City should give the Sons of the Confederacy a document stating that the City gives them the right to use the property for the dedicated monument in perpetuity. None-the-less, it is a monument, and one of great historical significance to Portsmouth and the State, and therefore protected under the authority of the Virginia Department of Historic Preservation. It most likely is also protected under the National Historic Preservation Act, since it is situated in a National Historic District. This is a monument important to the history of this State and our City and to those who sacrificed their lives in defending it against aggression. It is an important tribute to our City's past and is a sign of remembrance to those who during another era, gave their lives by the thousands, in the greatest and bloodiest conflict of our history for our Commonwealth. It is also a sign that marks a pivot point in American history that cannot, nor should not be erased, nor distorted for political correctness or social unease. We must remember the past and recognize our turbulent history as we live our daily lives and move into the future. It is the most important sculptural monument in





this City, of historical importance and of great tourist value, that adds beauty and character to our urban landscape.