

## STATE OF THE CITY

The word for 2008 is "change." This year guarantees to bring a tumultuous year of change for the City of Jonesboro. Elections of a new president, new mayor, and potentially six new aldermen will dramatically impact Jonesboro now and in the future.

In 2007 my department heads demonstrated coordination by streamlining the permit process, coupled with the collaborative efforts of planning, fire, engineering, and the inspections department for site plan reviews. Concerted actions of animal control, council, police department and public works produced a new animal control shelter scheduled to open in late May or early June of this year.

As Jonesboro continues to mature, the expansion of the "Service or Helping" sector is crucial. In 2008, two new Fire Stations will open before March 31<sup>st</sup> and two additional stations will be well under construction before the year's end. Each new station will help maintain efficient fire response times and ratings thus helping protect citizens physically and financially. Improving our park systems is another service area planned for progress in 2008. Greenways from Nettleton Schools to the Turtle Creek Mall provide a safe school route option for the children in that particular area. The next phase of the greenway is planned to move in the direction of Arkansas State University.

As I complete the final year of my term, I want the citizens of Jonesboro to understand my commitment to this city. The city staff possesses a willing and dedicated attitude of service that we are all blessed to have at our disposal, and more blessed to work with everyday. I know they will do everything in their power to assure the best is given for the City of Jonesboro. My staff and I are eager to continue on the path of attacking the opportunities of drainage, traffic, ADA compliance and the master street plan.

Substantial completion of the Owens Street project in 2007 and four more projects scheduled for construction in 2008 will cover nearly one half of the initial twelve "Hot Spots" identified in the summer of 2006.

The city, as evident by recent advancements in business and industry, continues to grow even as the nation faces unsettling times. Alberto-Culver, Downtown Jonesboro revitalization, NEA Baptist, St. Bernard's Day Facility, and The Mall at Turtle Creek are just a few of the new movers and shakers in the Jonesboro economic scene. Diversity in our industries provides stability in turbulent economic times. Education, health care, retail, and manufacturing are all major employers in our great city. Jonesboro also possesses significant homegrown headquarters for major industry players. Jonesboro's workforce is one of the best in Arkansas. It is competitive, productive, diverse, and thanks to all our excellent school systems educated.

As I contemplate the prior three years of my term and anticipate the final year, I will always remember and appreciate the people I've met and interactions I've experienced. Time will judge if my successes have outweighed my failures and I vow to continue to do everything in my power to keep Jonesboro moving forward.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your mayor,

Mayor Doug Forman

