



NFK2050

Appendix I: Engagement

What We've Heard

ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT AND COMMUNITY VISION

At every stage of the NFK2050 Plan, Norfolk's diverse stakeholders had a seat at the table. A broad range of tools, events, conversations, and surveys collected ideas and invited Norfolk residents into the collaborative process of creating a plan that would serve all communities in the city, now and in the future.



150+
opportunities
to engage
in person

2+ years
of community
engagement

2100+
touchpoints with
the community

700+
engaged
through Open
Houses and
online tools



Community Engagement

What we heard from the Norfolk community through the NFK2050 engagement process was far-ranging, optimistic, and visionary: a deep appreciation for Norfolk’s neighborhoods, empathy for our most vulnerable neighbors, a passion for our natural and urban environments, and a belief that Norfolk can truly become more connected and prosperous by 2050. This shared vision in turn laid the foundation for the rest of the NFK2050 Plan.

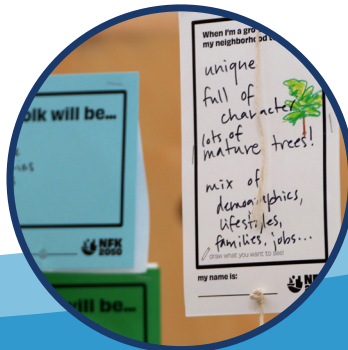
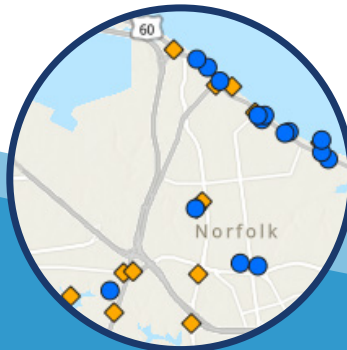
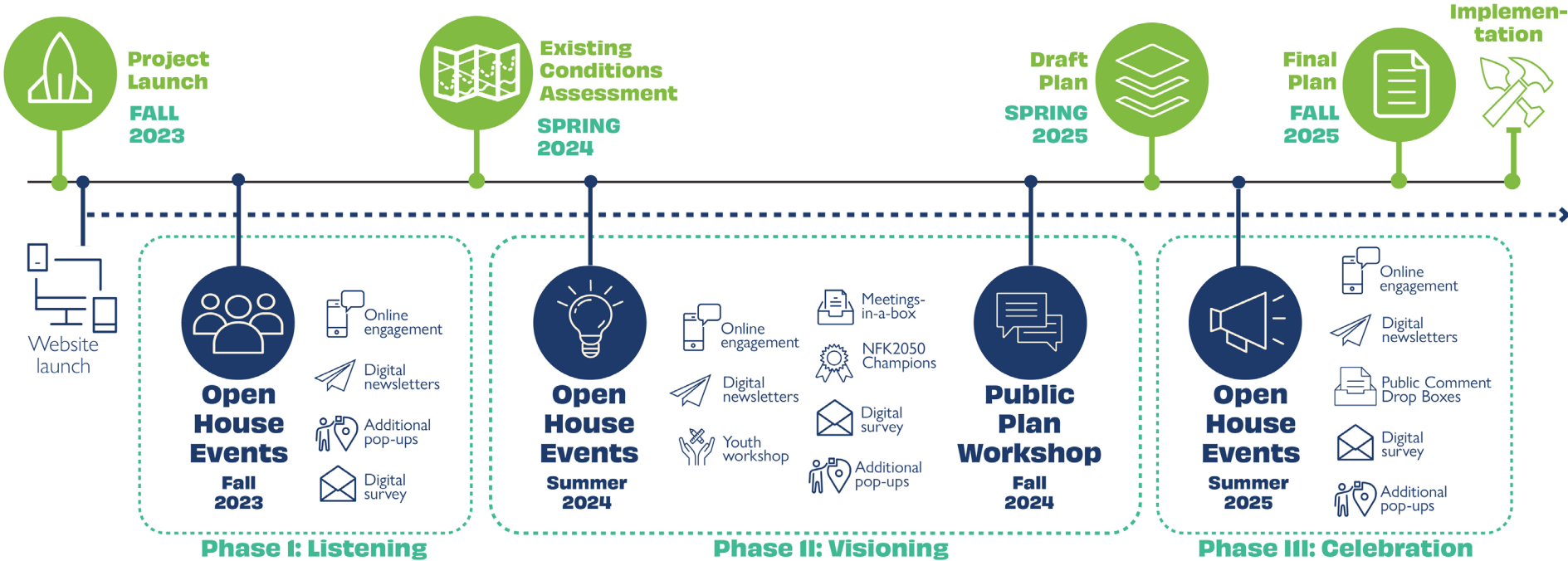
The NFK2050 team developed a wide range of tools to gather input from community stakeholders, residents, business owners, and other partners across the 24 months of the planning process.

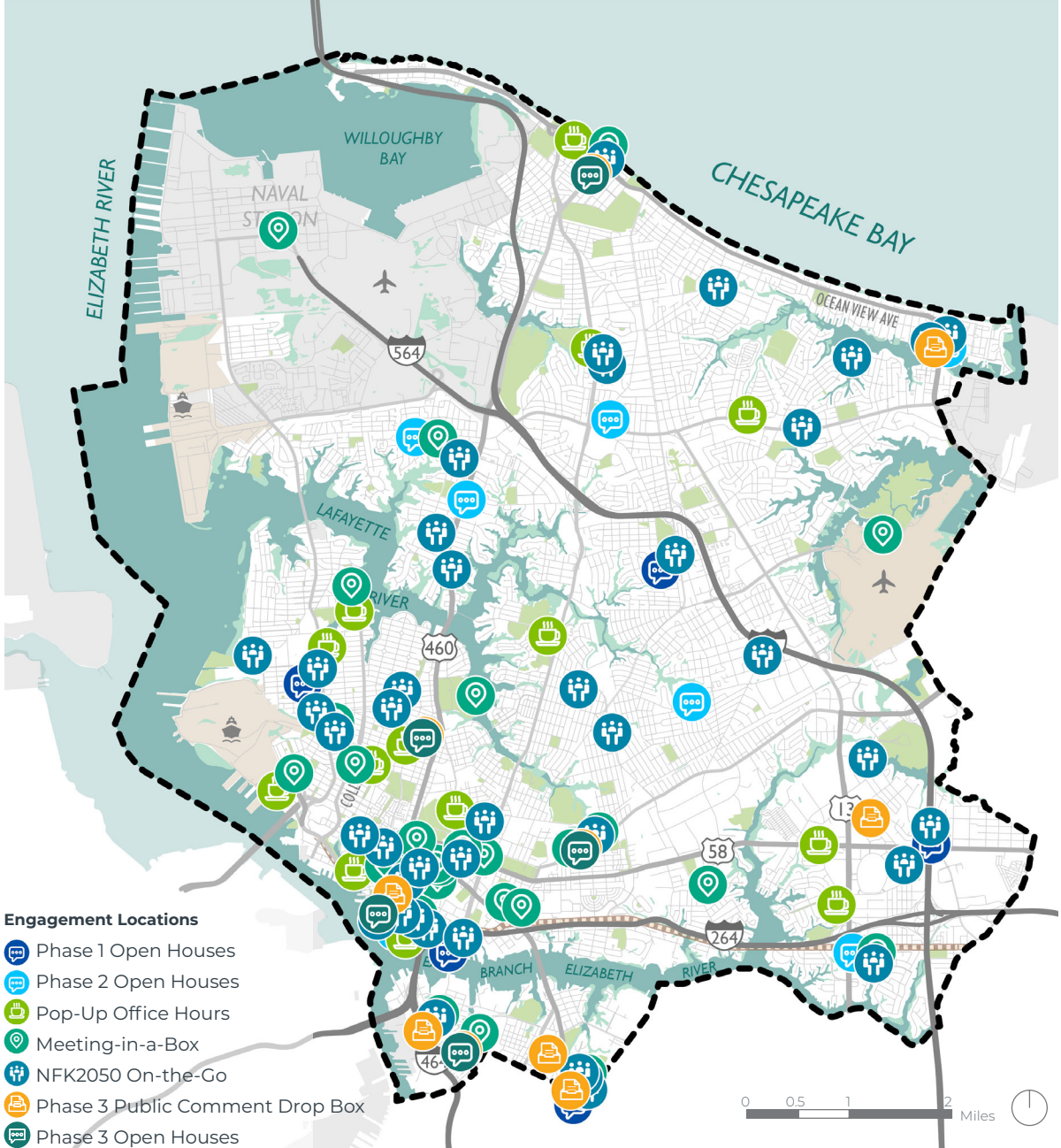
The team convened a standing Engagement Task Force comprised of city staff representing the departments of Communications and Marketing; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; and Neighborhood Services, in addition to members of the consultant team, a representative from the City Planning Commission, and Planning staff. This Task Force guided the overall development and timeline for outreach and gathering feedback, helping to spread the word to their constituents and ensure the process was inclusive and far-reaching.

Every event, touchpoint, conversation, and comment was documented. Both Phase 1, **Listening**, and Phase 2, **Visioning**, were summarized in robust reports that are available on the NFK2050 Project Website. Phase 3, **Celebration**, commenced in Summer 2025, to gather feedback on the Draft Plan. The feedback from those events was incorporated in the priorities for Implementation.

This document describes each of these primary tools and their development and deployment in more detail.

ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE





150+ In-Person Engagements

NFK2050 employed a wide range of tools to gather input from community stakeholders, residents, business owners, and other partners across the 24 months of the planning process, including open houses in every Ward; pop-up office hours; meetings with civic leagues and other community organizations; a flexible “meeting-in-a-box” tool that individuals and groups could use to host their own conversations; an interactive website with engagement tools; public comment drop box locations with printed copies of the Draft Plan document; and a group of volunteer Plan Champions who helped to spread the word about NFK2050. Read more about the engagement toolkit on the following spreads.



(WRT)

Figure I: Engagement Locations by type

Source: City of Norfolk

NFK2050 In-Person Engagement Locations

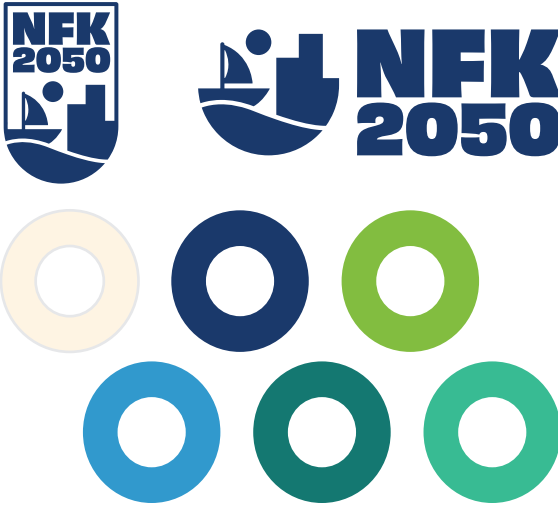
- Afterglow Brewing
- Aldersgate United Methodist Church
- Always Latte Cafe/La’Vie Cafe
- American Legion Tidewater Post 327
- Assembly Norfolk
- Aviation Institute of Maintenance
- Azalea Inn & Time Out Sports Bar
- Berkley Community Center
- Berkley Supermarket
- Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church
- Blocker Norfolk Family YMCA
- Borjo Coffeehouse
- Cafe Stella Roasters
- Calvert Square Family Investment Center
- Christ United Methodist Church
- Chrysler Museum of Art
- City Hall
- Coalescence Coffee Company
- Coaster Coffee
- COVA Brewing Co
- Crossroads Community Center
- Cure Coffeehouse
- Department of Neighborhood Services
- Dominion Enterprises
- Downtown Norfolk Transit Center
- East Ocean View Community Center
- Eleanor’s Norfolk
- Fairlawn Community Center
- First Baptist Church
- Franklin Arms Midrise Senior Residence
- Gather Norfolk
- Gethsemane Community Fellowship
- Granby High School
- Granby Norfolk Family YMCA
- GROW
- Hampton Roads Workforce Council
- Harbor Park
- Howard Hanna Downtown Norfolk
- Huntersville Community Center
- Ingleside Baptist Church
- Janaf Library
- Jeff Robertson Park
- Jordan-Newby Library at Broad Creek
- Just Pic’d Juices
- Lafayette Park
- Lake Taylor Transitional Care Hospital
- Lamberts Point Community Center
- Made in Norfolk
- Mary D Pretlow Library
- Mudita Cafe
- Naas Bakery
- Naval Exchange
- Neptune’s Fury Cafe and Roastery
- New Hope Christian Community Center
- Next Step to Success
- Norfolk Apostolic Church
- Norfolk Fitness & Wellness Center
- Norfolk International Airport
- Norfolk Main Navy Exchange (NEX)
- Norfolk Public Health Department
- Norfolk State University Student Center
- Norfolk World Trade Center
- North Shore Road Playground
- Northside Park
- Norview Community Center
- Ocean View Beach Park
- Otter’s Berth - Elizabeth River Trail
- Park Place Multi-Use Center
- Poplar Hall Park
- Purpose Park
- Push Comedy Theater
- Ready Academy
- Richard A Tucker Memorial Library
- Riverside Baptist Church
- Roosevelt Gardens Civic League Building
- Rose Marie Arrington Community Center
- Saint Patrick’s Catholic School
- Selden Market
- Sewells Point Golf Course
- Sherwood Forest Community Center
- Slover Library
- Smartmouth Brewing Co
- Southside Aquatic Center
- Southside Boys & Girls Club
- St Timothy Lutheran Church
- Sweet Jam Café
- The Plot
- The Scope Arena
- The Williams School
- Three Ships Coffee Roasters
- Town Point Park
- Trinity Lutheran Church School
- Trinity-Word of Faith Baptist Church
- Vessel Craft Coffee
- Virginia Career Works
- Virginia Club
- Voyager Coffee

Engagement Toolkit

Branding & Outreach

The NFK2050 brand, developed in collaboration with the City’s planning & communications team and building on the City’s existing brand identity, captures the maritime spirit of Norfolk, Virginia. From the logo to the color palette, to the transparent wave pattern water is an essential brand element and one that Norfolk residents can identify with.

The NFK2050 logo shows a small sailboat in the water, the city on the horizon, and the sun rising above them—elements that are all familiar to Norfolk residents.



Outreach Materials

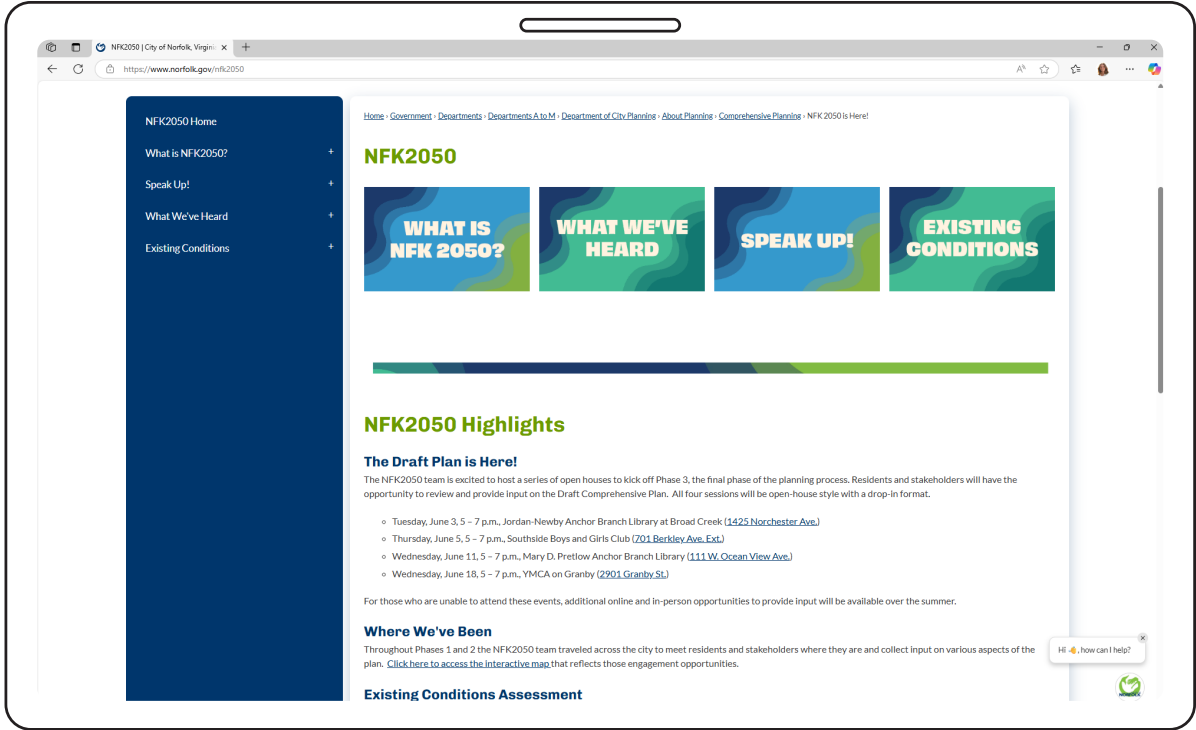
Outreach materials included postcards, flyers, and social media posts that invited residents to workshops and info sessions where they could provide feedback on goals and actions or learn more about NFK2050.

The outreach materials and community engagement materials applied the same blue and green palette, bold typeface, and wave pattern in order to establish a consistent and recognizable brand.

Project Website

Throughout the planning process, city staff kept a dedicated NFK2050 project webpage up to date, serving as a landing page for stakeholders to learn about the Plan and see upcoming events. Supporting documents were hosted there, including a GIS StoryMap to describe the main takeaways from the Existing Conditions analysis in a clear, easily understood format.

The website also served as a digital hub for collecting supplementary engagement to complement in-person events. For all three Phases, the website engagement asked similar questions to Open House events. Participants could share points on an interactive map; share a single word that captured their vision for Norfolk in 2050; and show support for specific emerging ideas by topic (ex. Housing, Resilience, etc). This feedback helped the project team understand which actions have broad community support and which may have less priority, informing the final Plan Goals and Actions (Ch. 4). Additionally, a digital newsletter was sent every few months to update interested residents on progress and invite them to upcoming events and engagement opportunities.



NORFOLK IN 2050:



More public access for kayaks, boats, and fishing - especially in places that used to have water access but no longer do.

— Norfolk residents via Online Engagement, 2024



Stills from the Storytelling Station at a Phase 1 Open House event (WRT)

Open House Events

The backbone of the NFK2050 Engagement toolkit centered around a series of in-person **Open House events** throughout the city.

As opposed to a traditional Public Meeting, which can be formal and top-down, the Open Houses were designed to be drop-in style, fun, and collaborative, allowing community members to spend as much or as little time as they desired. The team used boards, comment cards, and a large-scale interactive map to ask questions about the future of the city.

For Phase 1, **Listening**, the team held 6 open house events from October-December 2023. The kickoff event at Harbor Park included facilitated boards on key Plan Topics to gather

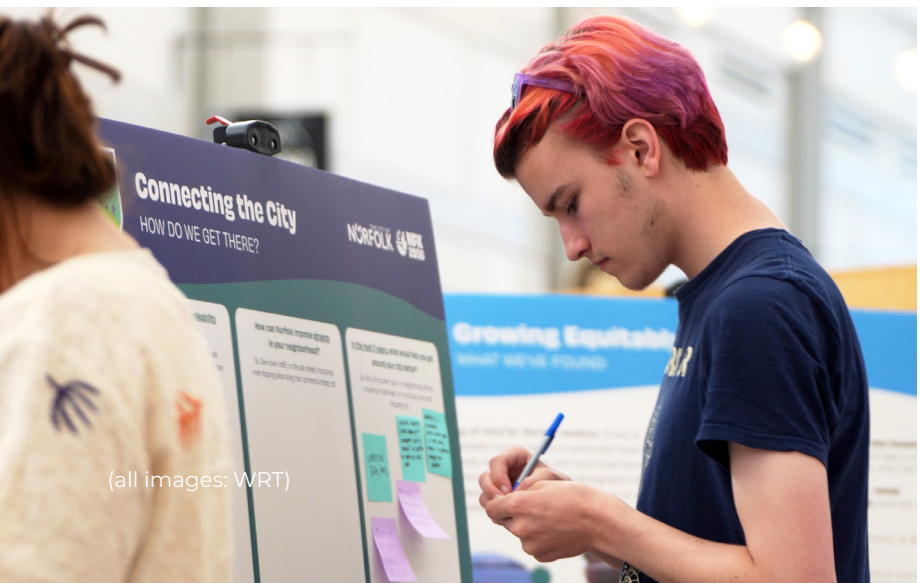
feedback on community ideas and concerns, plus a Vision Wall where participants could describe their ideal Norfolk by 2050. A large vinyl map helped locate sites in the city that participants loved or saw challenges. The event also featured a Storytelling station where participants could share their personal history and their vision for where Norfolk should go by 2050. The footage from these stories was used to help promote NFK2050 on the city's social media.

Subsequent Open House events in Phase 1 brought these engagement tools to public community spaces in all Wards of the city, ensuring that residents from every corner of Norfolk had the opportunity to weigh in.

For Phase 2, **Visioning**, the team hosted 6 open house events in May/June 2024. These reflected work to date on the emerging Plan Vision and Actions, encouraging participants

to indicate on a physical map where city improvements were needed with regard to Plan Topics. Specific policy ideas were tested with the community using engagement boards to gauge support.

Phase 3, **Celebration**, included 4 Open House events held in June 2025. These were designed to gauge community priorities for implementation and gather feedback on the Draft Plan document. In addition to stations for the final Plan Pillars and Future Land Use Plan with physical copies of the Plan chapters for in-person review, there was also a station with an overview video for anyone new to the process.



(all images: WRT)

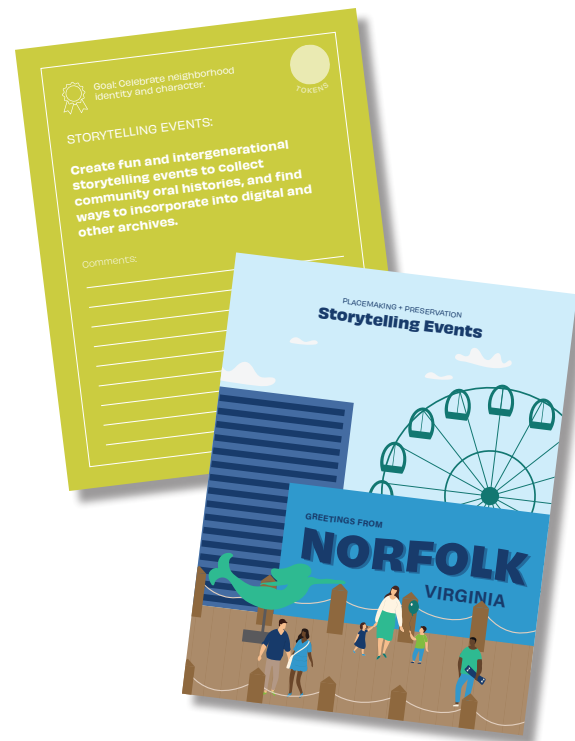




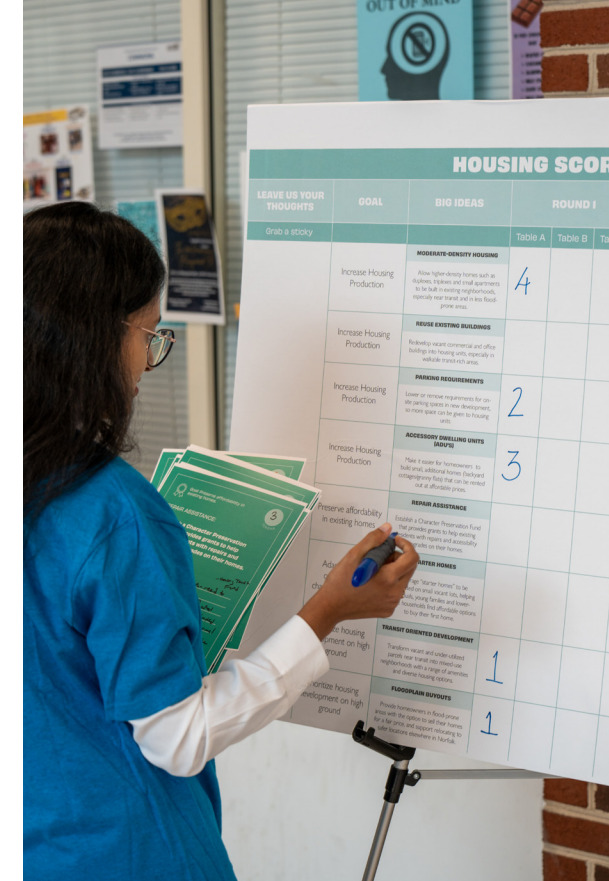
Public Plan Workshop

As Phase 2 engagement activities began to wrap up, the team determined that the emerging Plan Goals and Actions would be best developed in collaboration with members of the Norfolk community rather than behind closed doors. To that end, the planning team designed a unique event that brought community members and stakeholders to the table to help test, refine, and generate pivotal policy ideas to shift Norfolk towards the future vision.

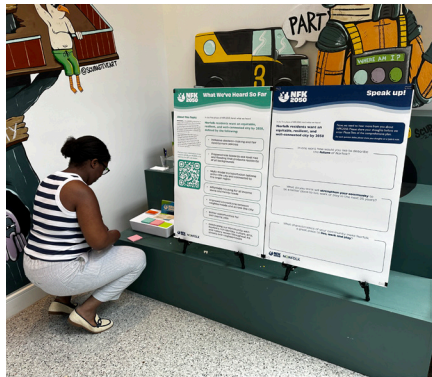
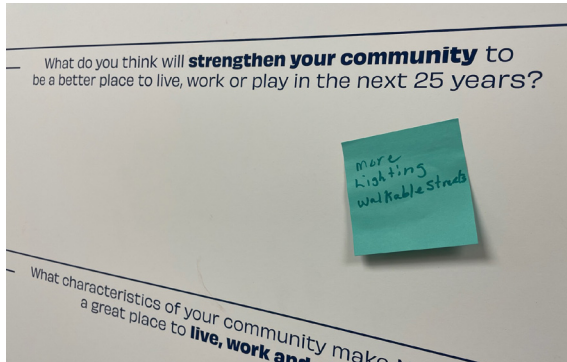
The **Public Plan Workshop** (October 2024) created small groups facilitated by members of the consultant team, organized by Plan Pillar. Each table received 10 “Big Ideas” on cards, to be flipped over and read out loud. Participants were able to indicate with a flag if they wanted to support the policy or if they had questions or concerns. A short discussion ensued with the group asking questions, discussing options for improvements, and determining where in the city an idea might best be deployed. At the end of the hour, the participants chose their top three ideas that they felt should be priority for inclusion in the Plan.



After three rounds of conversations, the facilitators tallied up the top “votes” to understand emerging consensus. After the Workshop, the core planning team was able to take the suggestions and comments into account when refining the final policy ideas (Chapter 4). Consultants, Plan Champions, City staff, and Advisory Committee members all participated as facilitators and participants in the Plan Workshop.



(all images: WPT)



Thank you to our energetic NFK2050 Plan Champions, including:

Mya Baskerville | Barry Bishop | Jay Boone | Carlos Clanton | Debby Forehand | Phillip Hawkins Jr. | Vince Hodges | Jasmine Howard | Steve Jones | Catie Sauer | Mike Taft | Christopher Wilkening | And more from all over Norfolk!

Plan Champions

In addition to the formal Phase 2 Engagement events, the planning team recruited a dedicated group of volunteer community ambassadors, the **NFK2050 Plan Champions**, to help create additional two-way communication between the team and the larger Norfolk community. These Plan Champions engaged their neighbors and social networks on NFK2050, adding to the voices that could be included in the planning process.

The recruitment process commenced in Spring 2024, inviting Norfolk residents 18 years of age or above. Champions attended a short training and were invited to reach out to neighbors and participate in city-wide events. The Plan Champions most often interacted with the process through the deployment of the Meeting-in-a-Box tool, which they brought to community events or conversations, then reporting ideas or priorities from their network back to the planning team for integration. Champions also helped to promote and facilitate engagement events like the Open House and Plan Workshop events.

Our NFK2050 Plan Champions are passionate about their communities, recognizing the importance of their neighbors' voices being included in the NFK2050 process. The planning

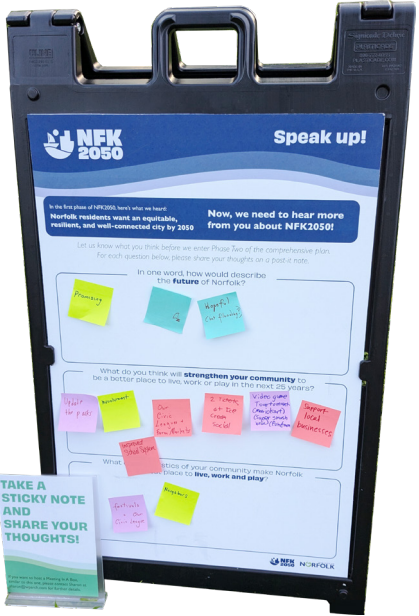
team is very grateful for their participation and energy in the process and we hope to continue our relationships with these partners as NFK2050 is implemented!

Meeting-in-a-Box Events

Not every community member is able to or feels comfortable attending a large-scale community event, but they may be more willing to speak directly with neighbors or other trusted partners. In that spirit, the team developed a flexible engagement tool called a **“Meeting in a Box”** (MIAB) that acted as a supplement to Phase 2 Open House events.

Members of the consultant team worked with Plan Champions and other partners to host flexible, informal events throughout the city to gather additional feedback. The MIAB summary boards and comment box introduced NFK2050 to new audiences and invited conversations around future ideas, understanding that every neighborhood is unique and has specific needs.

Sometimes the team piggybacked on existing events or festivals around the city, setting up in a public park or coffee shop and inviting conversation. In other cases, Plan Champions, Civic League representatives, or other stakeholders borrowed the kits to host their



own conversations. The team often encouraged participation through incentives (i.e. handing out ice pops at the Plot and Purpose Park on hot days over the summer; face painting and temporary tattoo stations at the Berkley Reunion; snacks for movie nights at the Berkley Center along with K.U.S.P. - Keeping Us Secure & Prosperous)

At all events, the notes were compiled and summarized, allowing the planning team to understand the diverse and nuanced needs of individual communities throughout Norfolk.

Online Surveys

Phase 3's **NFK2050 Online Survey** ran from June 26th to July 23rd 2025, after the Phase 3 Open Houses were completed. Over this period, 152 community members participated and 75 shared responses. The survey invited residents to weigh in on the drafts of the four Plan Pillars and Future Land Use Plan. Overall, the feedback showed a strong alignment with the city's vision for the future. Feedback was consolidated and led to edits or additions to the Final Plan document.

72% of respondents shared that the Draft Future Land Use Plan reflected their aspirations for the location and character of future growth and development in the city.

— NFK Online Engagement, 2025.

Pop-Up Office Hours

Pop-Up Office Hours were conducted by City Planning staff throughout the process to give residents and stakeholders a direct, easy way to connect with NFK2050 team members. Staff set up at local sites with existing foot traffic, like libraries, coffee shops, and other casual venues, and their presence helped to outreach the NFK2050 brand, timeline, and upcoming events. Discussions introduced the planning process and solicited general ideas, thoughts, and feedback for the Plan.

Drop Boxes

During the Phase 3 Engagement, the NFK2050 team also set up in-person **Drop Boxes** at 10 key sites around the city where members of the public could sit, flip through the Draft Plan documents, and drop off comment cards with any additional feedback or suggestions for the Final Plan. These Drop Boxes and their Comment Cards were designed to supplement the online documents and survey tools, and were available for review for three weeks, aligned with the online survey timeline. Stations included basic information about the Plan

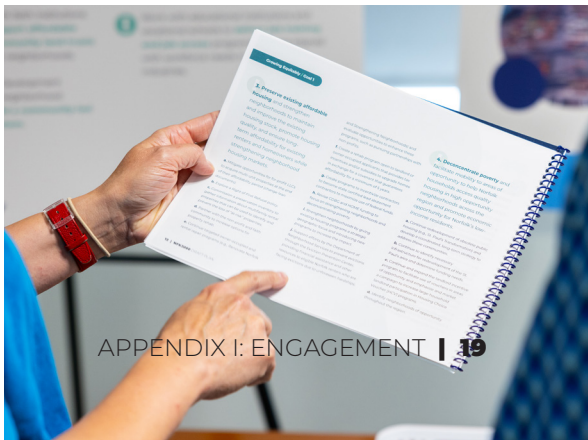


Drop Box station (City of Norfolk)

for anyone new to the process with a one-page “Citizen’s Guide to NFK2050.” The Drop Boxes were purposely designed and distributed to accommodate anyone who did not feel comfortable with online tools, lacked digital resources or devices, or who simply preferred reading the Draft Plan in person on paper. Comment cards were collected and added to the feedback from all Phase 3 engagement.



(all images City of Norfolk)



Community Vision

Norfolk residents want...



(all images: City of Norfolk)

EQUITY

in every area of focus - housing, small business support, resilience strategies, neighborhood investment, and public policy. Norfolk is looking for balanced growth.



CONNECTIVITY

through trails and bike paths, with light rail and ferry, and between neighborhoods and every part of the city, plus meaningful connections to Norfolk's history and story.



ACCESS

to water, to jobs, to affordable housing at multiple income levels, and to economic and entertainment centers.



ACTIVATION

of parks and open spaces, the waterfront, and economic and entertainment corridors.

NFK2050 needs to tackle...



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Norfolk residents want economic centers revitalized and new hubs developed in proximity to Norfolk's natural amenities. Residents want to ensure economic growth prioritizes small local businesses.

MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION

Norfolk residents want mobility between neighborhoods, along high-activity corridors, and with improved multi-modal infrastructure.



RESILIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

Norfolk residents are prepared to embrace resilience and environmental challenges. They want to invest in innovative strategies that will support a high quality of life in 2050 and beyond.

 Full Engagement Summary reports are available on the NFK2050 website!



HOUSING

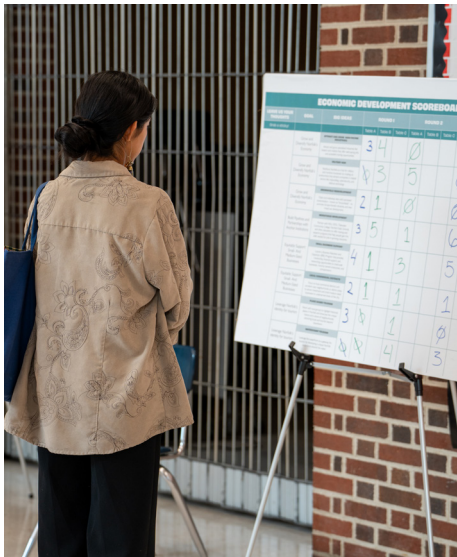
Lower-income residents, young families, and retirees are all grappling with rising rent prices and affordable home buying opportunities despite wanting to remain in Norfolk throughout all stages of life.

PLACEMAKING & PRESERVATION

Norfolk residents are proud of their city's culture, history, and neighborhood character, and want the story and identity of Norfolk represented.



(City of Norfolk)



(WRT)



(City of Norfolk)



“We have a pretty diverse neighborhood which I think is great for us as adults and also great for the kids. I feel like we’ve stumbled down to kind of like a magical little community.”

— Norfolk resident, Phase 1 Engagement

Norfolk is a city with a unique tapestry of vibrant neighborhoods, each with its own character, weaving together stories of resilience, diversity, and creativity.

By 2050, residents hope to see this tapestry grow even richer—a city boldly celebrating its culture, history, and people. This future should be deeply rooted in preserving landmarks, activating the waterfront, and fostering pride and belonging across the city. Murals should transform downtown spaces into canvases of collective expression, while public art along the Elizabeth River Trail could reflect the community’s diverse heritage. Historic treasures like Fort Norfolk should be highlighted, and the Southside’s historic districts need greater investment.

Residents want waterfront areas alive with family-friendly activities, gathering spaces, and cultural events—balancing resilience and activation strategies to connect people to the water that defines Norfolk.

By 2050, residents aspire to live in a vibrant, welcoming Norfolk—where history, art, and culture inspire big dreams.



(City of Norfolk)

“By 2050, Norfolk will be a safe place where people want to raise their families, start their business, and enjoy time together.”

— Norfolk resident, Phase 2 Engagement



(City of Norfolk)



(WRT)



(City of Norfolk)



I would love to make sure there are things that would allow people to come and not only raise their families here, but for them to be able to thrive when it comes down to their career, it comes down to their social life, it comes down to different activities.

— Norfolk resident, Phase 1 Engagement

Norfolk residents envision a city where equity is embedded in housing and economic development.

By 2050, policies should ensure affordable units in new developments, housing assistance programs for low-income families, and preservation of historic homes. Norfolk's neighborhoods should include mixed-use developments that combine homes, shops, and green spaces, fostering vibrant, connected communities. Gentrification concerns should be addressed through measures that allow residents to age in place and retain their homes.

Economic development should emphasize supporting small businesses and creating workforce opportunities. Residents envision a city with streamlined processes for entrepreneurs, microgrants for startups, and a focus on workforce training starting in schools. Investments in underserved areas should balance resources across the city, ensuring all neighborhoods benefit from growth. Investments in underserved areas will balance resources and drive

growth. Residents would like to see Norfolk's economy diversify with innovation hubs and green industries that attract talent.

By 2050, Norfolk should be a model of inclusive growth, where all residents can thrive.



(City of Norfolk)

By 2050, Norfolk will be well-connected, more equitable, affordable for all walks of life, and have a high quality of life.

— Norfolk resident, Phase 2 Engagement



(City of Norfolk)



(WRT)



(WRT)



I think the city is doing a wonderful job of planning interventions to make sure that the impact of storms aren't as severe with sea walls, levees and natural shorelines. We want to make sure our most vulnerable neighbors are taken care of as well.

— Norfolk resident, Phase 1 Engagement

Norfolk residents understand the challenges and opportunities presented by their city's relationship with water.

By 2050, they hope to see their community thriving as a model for resilience and environmental stewardship. Improved stormwater infrastructure, permeable driveways, and living shorelines should transform neighborhoods into resilient havens, while restored wetlands and oyster reefs could blend ecological restoration with public access.

These efforts should protect homes, generate green jobs, and establish Norfolk as a leader in climate resilience. Nature should be woven into the fabric of daily life. An expanded Elizabeth River Trail could connect neighborhoods to Downtown, creating a ribbon of outdoor exploration. Tree-lined streets and shaded parks should reduce urban heat and encourage community gathering. Kayak launches, pedestrian-friendly trails, and bike networks could offer accessible ways to experience Norfolk's natural beauty while promoting sustainability.

Norfolk's future is one where environmental care and community well-being intersect. Thoughtful investments in clean watersheds, park programming, and green infrastructure should foster pride and belonging. In this vision, **Norfolk is not only resilient but a vibrant example of how to embrace nature and inspire future generations.**



(WRT)

By 2050, Norfolk will be known for finding equitable, just, and innovative ways for living with water and climate change impacts.

— Norfolk resident, Phase 1 Engagement





THE CITY OF
NORFOLK

www.nfk2050.com