

City of Norfolk
Comprehensive Plan

Adopted by City Council December 9, 2025



For more information on the NFK2050 Comprehensive Plan, please visit the project website:
http://www.nfk2050.com/

City of Norfolk
Comprehensive Plan

NORFOLK

NFK2050 was adopted as Norfolk's new Comprehensive Plan on December 9, 2025 and became effective on January 1, 2026.

Form and Correctness Approved: BAP

By: _____
Office of the City Attorney

Contents Approved:

By: _____
DEPT. Planning

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

PH-1 **Ordinance No. 50201**

AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL THE GENERAL PLAN ENTITLED PLANORFOLK2030 AND TO ADOPT THE PLAN ENTITLED NFK2050 AS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY OF NORFOLK.

- - -

WHEREAS, the comprehensive plan for the City of Norfolk has been revised and updated;

WHEREAS, the City Planning Commission has directed and managed the preparation of a new plan, known as NFK2050, has held a public hearing on said plan, has certified the plan submitted to this Council in accordance with section 15.2-2226 of the Code of Virginia, and has recommended its adoption;

WHEREAS, the certified plan has been posted on the website maintained by the City of Norfolk in accordance with section 15.2-2226 of the Code of Virginia;

WHEREAS, this Council has conducted a public hearing and has maturely considered the plan and other information, including information collected during the public hearing; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that NFK2050 provides appropriate guidance for accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the City of Norfolk that will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of the City's inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities;

WHEREAS, the Council finds that adoption of NFK2050 is in the best interest of the City of Norfolk and its citizens; now therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Norfolk:

Section 1:- That the previous comprehensive plan, PlaNorfolk2030, as amended, is hereby repealed.

Section 2:- That NFK2050, a copy of which is attached hereto, along with any amendments presented, considered, and approved at the public hearing, be and the same hereby is approved and adopted as the comprehensive plan for the City of Norfolk.

Section 3:- That each and all of the appendices to NFK2050, copies of which are on file in the offices of the Department of City Planning, are approved and adopted as part of the comprehensive plan for the City of Norfolk.

Section 4:- That this ordinance shall be in effect on and after January 1, 2026.

EXHIBIT:
NFK2050 - City of Norfolk Comprehensive Plan (294 pages)

Adopted by Council December 9, 2025
Effective January 1, 2026

Richard A. Bull
RICHARD ALLAN BULL

BY: _____
CHIEF DEPUTY CITY CLERK

To the Norfolk Community:

From all of us on the City Planning Commission, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to the thousands of Norfolk residents and stakeholders who contributed to shaping NFK2050, our city's new Comprehensive Plan. This multi-year effort was made possible by your ongoing support and engagement, resulting in a Plan that will guide Norfolk's future growth and development.

Rooted in the voices of our diverse neighborhoods, NFK2050 outlines a bold vision for a resilient, equitable, and inclusive Norfolk, one that ensures a high quality of life for all current and future residents. This vision honors our city's identity and history, promotes safe and complete neighborhoods, increases housing opportunities, strengthens workforce development, protects our natural environment, builds citywide resilience, and advances a safe, equitable, and multimodal transportation system.

The Plan is built on four foundational Pillars: Celebrating our Community, Growing Equitably, Embracing Nature, and Connecting the City. Each Pillar includes clear goals, actions, and strategies to help us move collectively toward our shared vision for 2050.

City Council's adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is not the end, it's the beginning of the most critical phase: implementation. Bringing the Plan to life will require continued collaboration and commitment from the entire Norfolk community. Your passion and dedication are reflected throughout these pages, and we encourage you to stay engaged and continue to lead within your neighborhoods.

Thank you for your trust in the City Planning Commission. We look forward to working together to build a vibrant, inclusive, and thriving Norfolk for generations to come.



Ms. Kim Sudderth, Chair



Mr. Scott Bateman, Vice Chair



Mr. Larry Pendleton



Dr. Lelia Vann



Mr. Jeffrey Wells



Dr. Theresa Whibley



Mr. Jake Young

Acknowledgments:

Italics denote past member

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HR&A: Jonathan Meyers, Kelly Pang

NORFOLK RESIDENTS!

A heartfelt **THANK YOU** to all the Norfolk residents, stakeholders, and neighbors who participated in the process of developing NFK2050! Norfolk can only truly become the city we all envision through your diverse and optimistic voices.

THE CITY OF NORFOLK

NFK 2050

Executive Summary

NFK2050 is the Comprehensive Plan for Norfolk, establishing a framework for the city's growth and evolution over the next 25 years. NFK2050 has a planning horizon that will stretch through the year 2050, with implementation efforts beginning after Plan adoption.



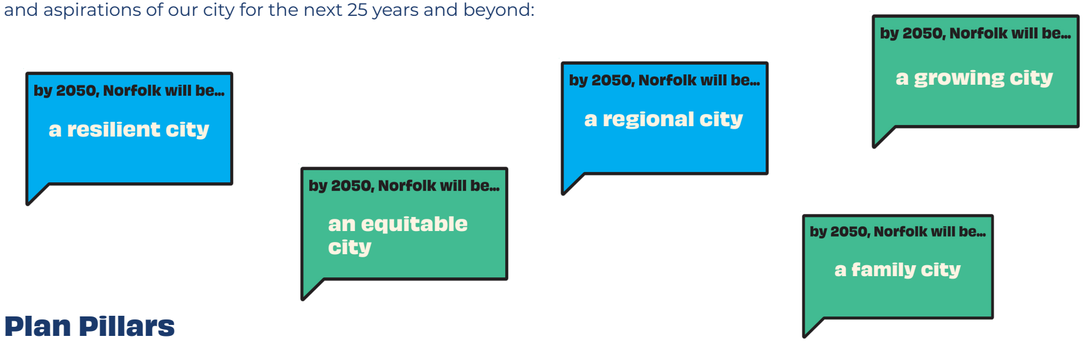
A Comprehensive Plan is a long-range document that will guide the vision of what a city wants to become in the future. NFK2050 is both a **Vision**—a consolidated idea of where we need to go—and a **Policy** document, with specific land use-related actions to take in order to get there.

As the update to the City's previous Comprehensive Plan (plaNorfolk2030), **NFK2050 is a broad effort to address a wide range of community issues and concerns** and to understand the important relationships between each part of the greater Norfolk community.

NFK2050 was built on a collective vision from our community, and the result is this Comprehensive Plan. The Plan was developed with internal and external partners, stakeholders, and community voices, throughout an extensive 2-year process. Read more about our community engagement in Chapter 1.

Plan Vision

With the strong guidance of the diverse voices in Norfolk's neighborhoods and communities, a consolidated Plan Vision (Chapter 2) encompasses the dreams and aspirations of our city for the next 25 years and beyond:



Plan Pillars

NFK2050's Goals and Actions (Chapter 4) are organized under four primary Pillars. These Plan Pillars are aspirational, and broaden the vision for Norfolk's future development:



CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

PLAN TOPICS:
Historic Preservation; Public Art & Culture; Placemaking; City Facilities & Services



GROWING EQUITABLY

PLAN TOPICS:
Housing; Economic Development



EMBRACING NATURE

PLAN TOPICS:
Resilience; Parks and Open Space; Sustainability



CONNECTING THE CITY

PLAN TOPICS:
Mobility & Transportation; Utilities; Critical Infrastructure

Celebrating Our Community



(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

Goals:

GOAL 1:
Celebrate and Preserve Neighborhood Identity, Character, and Histories

GOAL 2:
Support Complete and Healthy Neighborhoods

GOAL 3:
Support Safe and Vibrant Places

GOAL 4:
Support and Strengthen Community Facilities and Services

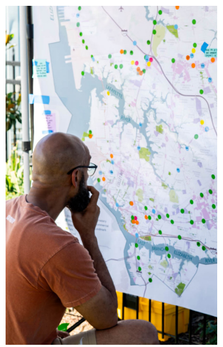
Big Ideas:

- **Highlight city neighborhoods** by incorporating neighborhood specific wayfinding, branding, and history campaigns by Ward.
- **Designate new historic neighborhoods and landmarks,** prioritizing Norfolk's communities whose histories have not been widely told.
- Create **Cultural Corridors** throughout the city, where streets/districts are themed around the history/identity of the neighborhood (e.g., art installations, historical markers, and events).
- Host regional, national, and international events and **attract new events** to the city.
- Promote **mixed-use development** with active ground floors, community amenities, and pedestrian-friendly streetscape improvements.
- **Test public amenities,** programming, infrastructure, and sites, gathering data and community buy-in for permanent improvements.
- **Assess food deserts in the city** to improve access to healthy food.
- Pursue incentives for **building improvements** to encourage property owners to invest in their buildings, storefronts, and houses.
- Equitably **expand public art** opportunities in every neighborhood.
- Build on existing **cultural arts districts** to ensure local artists and makers have access to affordable studio spaces, live/work options, and exhibition venues.
- **Fund public realm improvements,** walkability and placemaking efforts, transforming Norfolk's neighborhoods into vibrant destinations.
- **Connect existing and future city facilities** to their surrounding neighborhoods using safe and fully accessible multimodal networks.

Growing Equitably



(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

Goals:

GOAL 1:
Support a Housing Market that Meets the Needs of All Residents

GOAL 2:
Increase Housing Production and Adapt Housing Options for a Changing Population

GOAL 3:
Grow And Diversify Norfolk's Economy

GOAL 4:
Support Local Workforce Development and Build Strategic Pipelines

Big Ideas:

- **Deconcentrate poverty** and facilitate mobility to high opportunity neighborhoods.
- Preserve and **improve existing affordable housing.**
- Create new **affordable rental housing** and homeownership opportunities to address increasing affordability challenges faced by Norfolk's residents.
- Establish a **dedicated source to finance** affordable housing, preserve existing homes, support rental assistance, and invest in neighborhood improvements.
- Forge partnerships with faith-based institutions and universities to **enable enduring affordable housing through partnerships with community land trusts (CLTs),** especially in formerly redlined neighborhoods.
- Support Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) to lead neighborhood revitalization efforts and **build a community-led development ecosystem.**
- Implement affordable and **long-term homeownership programs tailored for public service professionals** and vulnerable populations, including te unhoused, elderly, disabled and low-income households.
- Position Norfolk as a **one-stop hub for defense and maritime industries** by attracting companies in related sectors such as shipbuilding, cybersecurity, and defense technology.
- Promote **clean, green redevelopment** and resilience investments on working waterfronts.
- Work with educational institutions and vocational schools, to provide **job training, job access, and research programs** that meet the needs of qualifications to enter the workforce in growing industries within the city.

Embracing Nature



(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

Goals:

GOAL 1:
Preserve and Enhance Natural Systems

GOAL 2:
Build and Maintain a Network of Green and Blue Infrastructure

GOAL 3:
Protect and Adapt Communities from Flooding and Other Risks

GOAL 4:
Integrate Resilience and Sustainability in Capital and Infrastructure Planning

GOAL 5:
Support a Comprehensive and Coordinated Approach to Building Resilience

Big Ideas:

- **Implement wetland design changes** that allow for the landward migration of wetlands, for resilience to sea level rise.
- Pursue opportunities to **daylight (re-surface) creeks** that have been buried to expand channel capacity and provide natural amenities for communities.
- Support continued **public access** along shorelines and waterfronts.
- Develop **coastal infrastructure as a waterfront amenity**, including blue parks, living shorelines, and waterfront trails.
- Develop **natural blue and green corridors**, such as a blue belts network of nature-based infrastructure in areas subject to chronic floods, prioritizing native plants, habitat corridors, and wetland restoration and enhance biodiversity.
- Locate new **"spongy" parks** in flood-prone areas so recreation spaces can provide additional storage for runoff, mitigating flooding during extreme rainfalls.
- **Increase the extent of natural areas along the waterfront**, using shoreline restoration projects such as living shorelines, and incentivize their use.
- **Address properties that are subject to recurrent flood events** or future sea level rise through voluntary buyouts, home elevation, etc.
- Strengthen infrastructure and apply best practices for long-term **sustainability, diversity of energy, and redundancy.**
- Evaluate whether existing public facilities, as well as clustered private businesses and facilities, can serve as **"Resilience Hubs".**
- Consider designating **"Resilience Districts"** that can be eligible for targeted infrastructure and resilience projects to consolidate existing efforts.
- Encourage building owners to **retrofit existing roofs** for stormwater treatment.

Connecting the City

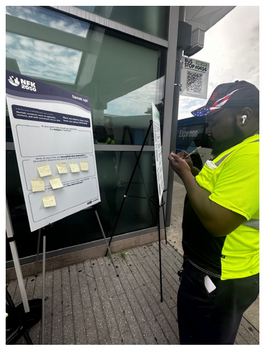




(City of Norfolk)



(WRT)



(WPA)



"I envision the future Norfolk as increasingly dense and vibrant with more housing and better connectivity— where people can walk or bike to neighborhood establishments, their office, and parts of the city."

— Norfolk resident, Phase 1 Engagement

Goals:

GOAL 1:
Enhance Multi-Modal Transportation throughout the City

GOAL 2:
Improve Safety and Reliability along Corridors

GOAL 3:
Improve Intracity Travel and Connections

GOAL 4:
Protect and Enhance Transportation and Utility Infrastructure

GOAL 5:
Support Regional, National, and International Connections

Big Ideas:

- Promote, encourage, and **incentivize transit-oriented development (TOD).**
- Reduce the number of and **mitigate the impacts of blocked railroad crossings** within the city.
- Foster a safe **pedestrian experience at crossings and beneath overpasses** through urban design strategies such as street design changes, public art, inviting lighting, and landscape improvements.
- **Expand high-capacity transit** within the city, especially to major nodes like Naval Station Norfolk and the Military Circle area.
- Implement the **expanded bicycle network**.
- Align transportation infrastructure and facilities with **accessible housing and community services** for elderly and disabled residents.
- **Develop greenways** and link additional trails and pathways to the Elizabeth River Trail to create a complete system.
- Seek funding to actively reverse historic injustices caused by highways and **reconnect Norfolk's neighborhoods.**
- Use **micro transit** to fill in gaps in the transit system.
- Explore the feasibility of **reusing former rail lines** and former or underutilized rights-of-way for trails and connections.
- Raise and **reinforce critical access roads** and evacuation routes.
- Support the implementation of the City's **Electric Vehicle Charging** Plan.
- **Bury overhead infrastructure** In areas of low flood risk.
- **Advocate for the completion of a holistic regional transportation network** of sidewalks, bike paths, trails, complete streets, transit stops, etc.
- **Expand passenger rail service and intercity bus service** between Norfolk to both in-state and out-of-state locations.
- Construct regional infrastructure that **connects the Peninsula to the Southside.**
- Advocate for a **cohesive wayfinding and signage system** across all modes of regional travel.

Future Land Use

A Future Land Use Map (FLUM) is a map of the community's **intentions**. It is distinct from a zoning map, which is a map of what is and is not permissable in a given area; instead, the Future Land Use Map illustrates a **consolidated community vision for where and how Norfolk will grow**.

NFK2050's Future Land Use Map uses categories called **Place Types.** Place Types are a way of thinking about a city's character in ways that are understandable for everyday citizens. They combine **land use** (what activity someone can conduct on a given parcel of land), **community character** (types of buildings, amenities, gathering places); and **urban design and form** (how densely to build, how close together buildings should be). Each Place Type is described in more detail in Chapter 3.

Place Types \ Typical Land Use	Open Space	Conservation	Single-Unit Residential	ADUs	Multi-family, small-scale (2-6 units)	Multi-family, large-scale (7+ units)	Mixed Use	Commercial/ retail, small-scale office	Office, large-scale	Research and Development	Institutional	Entertainment	Utility/Transportation	Light Industrial	Heavy Industrial
Transportation & Logistics	○					○	○	○	●	○	○	○	●	●	●
Innovation & Production	○				○	○	○	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●
Regional Activity Center	○					○	●	●	●	○	●	●	○	○	
Corridor Mixed Use	○				○	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	○	○	
Community Mixed Use	●		○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○		○	
Sustain - Coastal	●	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○		○	○			
Sustain - Suburban	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○		○	○			
Sustain - Traditional	○	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○		○	○			
Open Space	●	○						○			○	○			
Conservation	○	●													

● PRIMARY USE ○ SECONDARY USE

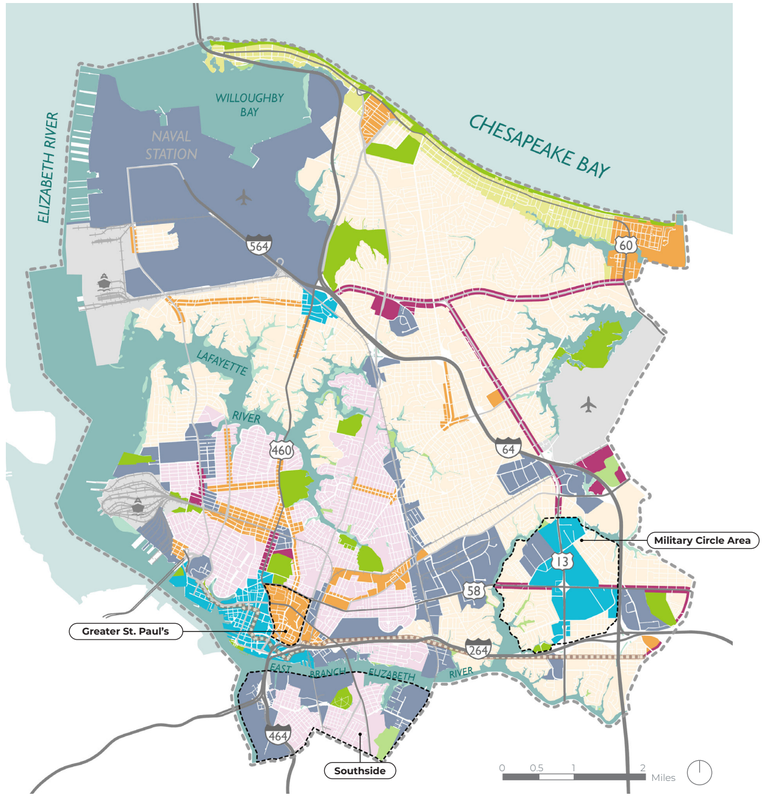


Figure 1: NFK2050 Future Land Use Map

NFK2050's Future Land Use Map shows Place Types distributed throughout the city. Areas are designated "Sustain" where context and character should continue to guide development decisions. Notably, most of the designated Place Types that fall outside the "sustain" categories — those where the city is encouraging more active growth and redevelopment — are limited to areas of lower environmental risk.

Please see Chapter 3 for more detail on the methdology and development of the Future Land Use Map.

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01 What is NFK2050?

INTRODUCTION AND PLAN BACKGROUND

NFK2050 is the Comprehensive Plan for Norfolk, establishing a framework for the city's growth and evolution over the next 25 years. NFK2050 has a planning horizon that will stretch through the year 2050, but implementation efforts begin after the plan is adopted.



(City of Norfolk)

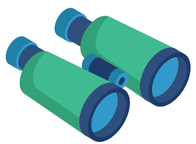
What is NFK2050?

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a long-range document that will guide the vision of what a city wants to become in the future.



Sometimes also referred to as a master plan or a general plan, comprehensive plans are foundational documents of planning, land use, zoning, and growth management in the United States, and enable local government officials and citizens to **anticipate changes occurring within the community.**



NFK2050 is both a **Vision**—a consolidated idea of where we need to go—and a **Policy** document, with specific land use-related actions to take in order to get there.

Why NFK2050?

As the update to the City's previous Comprehensive Plan (plaNorfolk2030), **NFK2050 is a broad effort to address a wide range of community issues and concerns**, and to understand the important relationships between each part of a community.

NFK2050 was developed over two years, beginning in Summer 2023 and adopted in 2025. As a long-range plan with a 25-year timeframe, the policies, vision, and land use guidance in this document will be official City policy through the year 2050.

While comprehensive plans are frequently amended to include new development and new policy ideas, the past decade of change in Norfolk has led to enough large-scale evolution in land use and zoning — notably, the city's understanding of climate risks like sea level rise — to warrant an updated plan that builds on efforts like Vision 2100.

Why Plan Now?

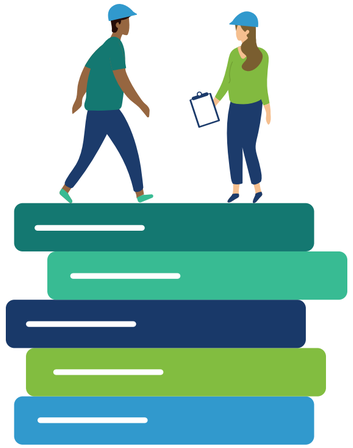
Norfolk is at an inflection point in its long and storied history. If the last quarter century was an indication of the rate of change, the next 25 years will be a dynamic time for Norfolk residents. We owe the next generation of citizens a consensus-informed plan to navigate the seas ahead.

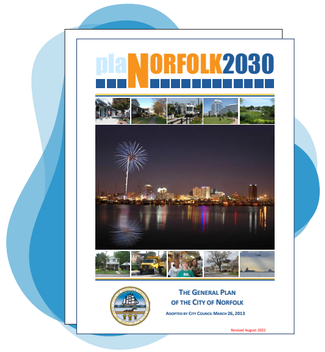
We have enough distance between us and the COVID-19 pandemic that we are beginning to understand its long-term effects on work, health, community and place. Housing costs are rising sharply nationwide, including in Hampton Roads. Our understanding of climate and environmental systems is more complex than ever, and our city has committed to addressing risk through top-down and bottom-up infrastructure.

NFK2050 comes at a crucial time for setting the stage for Norfolk's future. As we assess our current conditions and project into the future, we must recognize the power that large-scale, comprehensive planning can truly have to help us set Norfolk on a course to a brighter future.

Building on Past Planning

The work of NFK2050 did not start from scratch; many recent planning efforts guide the city's current land use and development landscape. NFK2050 builds on all relevant recommendations.





plaNorfolk2030 (2013)

Adopted in 2013, Norfolk's most recent comprehensive plan, **plaNorfolk2030**, includes recommendations and policies that the city's diverse neighborhoods are still utilizing to chart their future courses.

The Plan is organized into chapters, each addressing a specific topic area:

- The **Land Use Strategies** chapter lays out a holistic approach for how to think about future uses for Norfolk's land, complementing the existing built and natural environment.
- **"Creating and Maintaining Healthy and Vibrant Neighborhoods"** emphasizes the significant role that neighborhoods and their unique characteristics play in the lives of Norfolk residents.
- **"Providing Transportation Options"** centers safe and efficient mobility and increased investment in transportation choices.
- "**Enhancing Economic Vitality"** seeks investment opportunities for Norfolk to continue being a center for cultural, business, and educational resources of the region.
- **"Promoting Environmental Sustainability"** leverages the environmental resources of the city to connect residents with nature while promoting resiliency strategies.
- "**Ensuring Housing Choices For All"** promotes high quality, affordable housing through existing and new incentives and code enforcement strategies, protection from flooding, and alignment with the needs of the community.
- **"Supporting Lifelong Learning"** seeks opportunities for all Norfolk residents to develop their skills and interests through diverse learning opportunities: school preparedness, workforce training, and partnerships to provide continuing education for all ages.
- **"Delivering Quality Community Services"** advocates for effective services to Norfolk residents. It focuses on ensuring that City services meet the needs of residents and businesses.
- **"Enjoying Daily Life"** outlines a vibrant city where opportunities for recreation and leisure are accessible to all Norfolk residents.
- "**Preserving Our Heritage"** embraces and protects all the cultural, historic, and architectural resources that Norfolk has and promotes new and existing historic landmarks and districts through different actions and policies.
- **"Fostering Responsible Regional Cooperation"** calls for a collective effort to seek improvements and solutions to regional issues.

Within the **691 actions** identified in plaNorfolk2030 to set a path forward for Norfolk and its residents, **56.8% are ongoing, 20.2% are underway, and 9% are completed.** Of the 12 chapters that represent a specific topic, all of them have seen progress in the implementation of their actions, with most of them being "ongoing" or "underway." Only 12.6% of all the actions in the Plan have not yet been started.

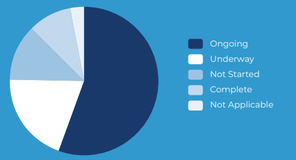
During NFK2050 Engagement events, residents frequently cited plaNorfolk2030 as a reference point for understanding a comprehensive plan and how it might guide city and neighborhood-scale projects. To that end, **many ongoing plaNorfolk2030 actions are folded into NFK2050's Future Land Use and Plan Goals, Actions, and Strategies,** ensuring that the effort to draft, adopt, and amend that document is a strong foundation for all the work to come.

56%
of plaNorfolk2030 actions are categorized as ongoing efforts

20%
of plaNorfolk2030 actions are underway

NEIGHBORHOODS

"Creating and Maintaining Healthy and Vibrant Neighborhoods" has 292 specific actions, of which **62% are ongoing or underway, and 34% are already completed.**



Of all 691 plaNorfolk2030 actions, 76% are ongoing or underway and 9% have been fully completed.

Source: City of Norfolk

The following Plans and Policies, while not all adopted by City Council, provided background, context, and guidance for the development of NFK2050:

CITYWIDE PLANS AND POLICIES:

- **A Green Infrastructure Plan ***
- **City of Norfolk Bicycle and Pedestrian Strategic Plan ***
- Complete Streets Policy
- Electric Vehicle Charging Plan
- Floodplain Management Plan
- Multimodal Transportation Master Plan
- **Norfolk Comprehensive Housing Study and Strategic Plan ***
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan Assessment
- Sand Management Plan
- Stormwater Design and Construction Manual
- **Vision2100 ***

COMMUNITY PLANS:

- A Strategic Plan for Southside
- A Vision for the Next Decade: Downtown Norfolk 2030
- A Vision for Wards Corner: Urban Development Area Plan
- Broad Creek Refresh Plan: Building a Community of Choice
- Central Hampton Boulevard Area Plan
- City of Norfolk Midtown Plan
- Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor
- Fairmount Park Neighborhood Revitalization Implementation Plan
- Greater Wards Corner Comprehensive Plan
- Military Circle/Military Highway Urban Development Area: A Vision for the Future

PATTERN BOOKS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- A Pattern Book for Norfolk Neighborhoods
- Coastal Character District Pattern Book
- Commercial and Mixed-Use Pattern Book
- Design Principles for Multifamily Development
- Elevating Homes Pattern Book
- Local Historic District Guidelines
- Missing Middle Pattern Book
- Norfolk Outdoor Spaces Guidelines
- The Broad Creek Refresh: A Pattern Book

REGIONAL PLANS:

- Hampton Roads Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Hampton Roads 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan
- Hampton Roads Joint Land Use Study
- Norfolk and Virginia Beach Joint Land Use Study

***** *indicates a plan is profiled on this spread. All plans listed are hosted on the NFK2050 website.*



Vision 2100 (2016)

Vision 2100 is a long-term citywide vision developed by an interagency team including the Departments of City Planning, Communications and Marketing, and Neighborhood Services, along with the Office of Resilience and the City Manager's Office. It is organized around four key themes: *Designing New Urban Centers*, *Enhancing Economic Engines*, *Adapting to Rising Waters*, and *Establishing Neighborhoods of the Future.*

The Plan's primary objective is to develop Norfolk as a dynamic, water-based community protected from sea level rise and flooding. NFK2050's Future Land Use Plan and many policy recommendations incorporate Vision 2100's thinking as foundational.

Green Infrastructure Plan (2018)

The Green Infrastructure Plan focuses on re-greening the city landscape, improving stormwater treatment, restoring shoreline habitats, and fostering recreation. The Plan is structured around four major strategies that link to specific and implementable actions: Natural and Constructed Green Infrastructure, Open Space Access, Shoreline Protection and Restoration, and Water Accessibility. Many of the projects lined up through this planning process are underway or have been completed, making these recommendations a cornerstone of NFK2050's environmental planning policies.





Norfolk Comprehensive Housing Study and Strategic Plan (2023)

Commissioned by the City's Department of Housing and Community Development, the Housing Study was charged with identifying current market trends and housing needs in Norfolk. These findings included an analysis of Norfolk's relatively stable population growth leading to a weaker housing market, and yet a wide diversity of housing stock across the city, especially compared to the rest of the region.

Many specific recommendations around how to grapple with housing challenges have been incorporated into NFK2050's policy recommendations.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Strategic Plan (2015)

This Plan, developed in 2015, recommends specific bicycle and pedestrian facilities on 12 key corridors, and provides a strong and detailed mobility foundation that NFK2050 can build on. Its recommendations include a granular level of detail developed for the 12 corridors as appropriate to its strategic function.

NFK2050's Future Land Use and policy recommendations strongly incorporate the specific recommendations and connections that the Strategic Plan lays out in order to build a more multimodal and active city.



Developing NFK2050

Collaborators:

Many entities contributed to the development of the NFK2050 Comprehensive Plan. The plan's organizational chart (opposite) illustrates the relationship, roles, and responsibilities of the parties who all contributed to the work.

City Planning Commission:

Norfolk's City Planning Commission (CPC) is a 7-member body appointed by City Council and responsible for the review of land use and zoning matters for the City of Norfolk.

The CPC served as the primary supervisors of the entire NFK2050 process. City staff and members of the Consultant team presented to the CPC regularly across the planning process, including 5 dedicated work sessions and additional monthly updates from City Planning staff. Commissioners also participated in Working Groups, chaired the Advisory Committee, and helped with outreach and feedback from many engagement events.

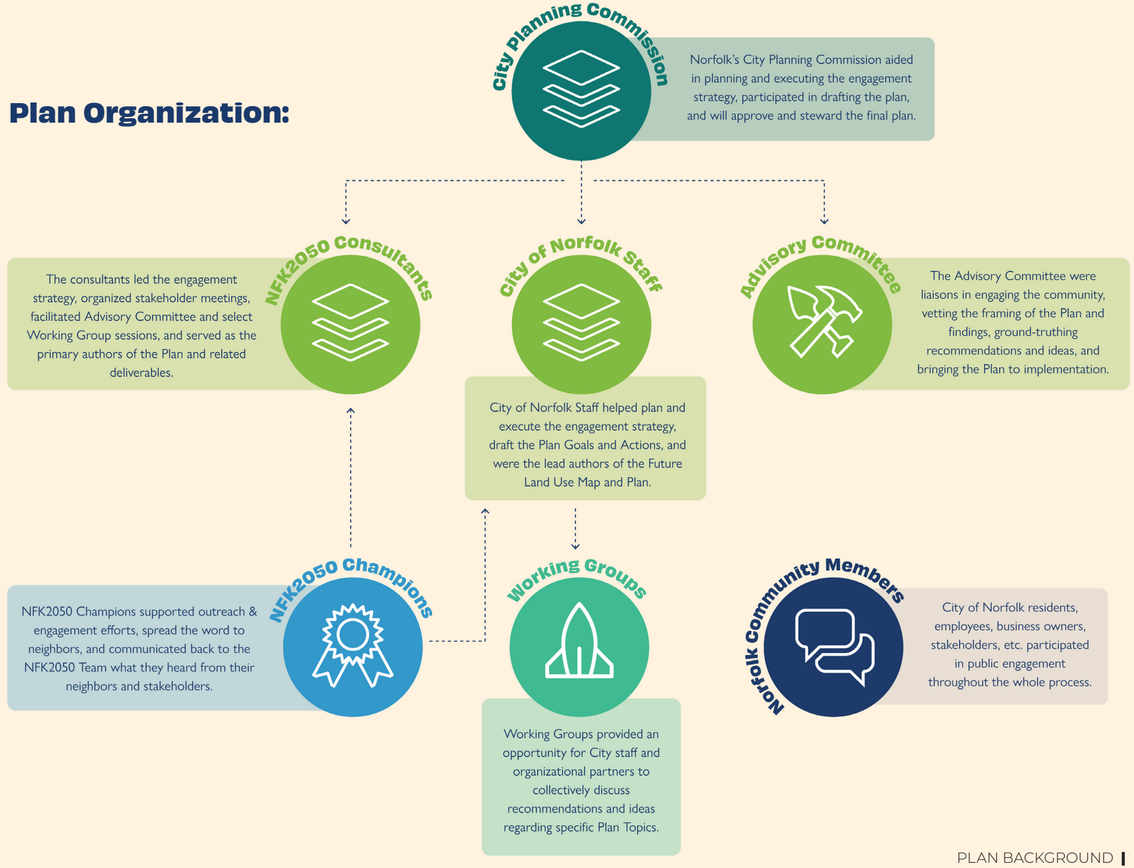
Working Groups:

The core NFK2050 Planning Team cannot accomplish the vision of NFK2050 without strong collaborators within and outside of Norfolk City Hall. With this in mind, we invited partners from other City departments and partner agencies to hybrid work sessions hosted at City Hall to help the team vet, draft, and discuss implementation. The Working Groups met twice internally and once at a public Plan Workshop, and were first organized by Plan Topic (ex. Mobility, Housing, etc.) and then later by the Plan Pillar format. These partner departments and agencies came to the table to help brainstorm and align their own organizational trajectory with emerging NFK2050 policy recommendations, and will be key leaders in bringing the final plan recommendations to action.

Norfolk Community Members and Plan Champions:

As outlined further in Appendix I (Community Engagement), the efforts to engage a broad cross-section of the Norfolk community were varied and numerous. Our engagement approach combined in-person and digital tools, with dedicated Plan Champions helping to share the plan with their communities and relay feedback from their neighbors back to the planning team. In all cases, the final NFK2050 Plan Vision, Goals, and Actions are grounded in what we heard from the community.

Plan Organization:

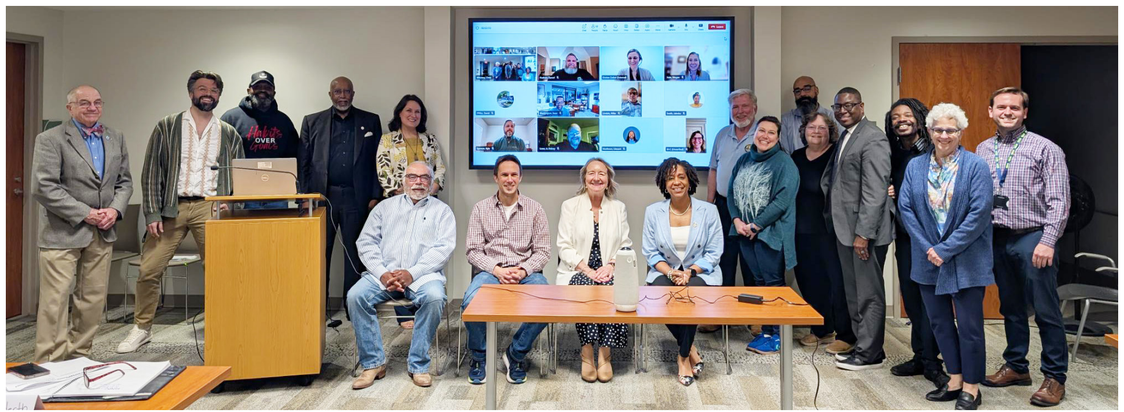


Advisory Committee

The NFK2050 Advisory Committee was appointed by the Norfolk City Council to advise and assist the City Planning Commission in its preparation of NFK2050.

The Advisory Committee is a broad representation of the Norfolk community, and Committee members serve as liaisons to their respective groups and organizations, act as a sounding board for residents, help encourage community participation in this planning process, and advocate for the Plan. The Committee assisted in developing the Plan and provided perspective on information gathered as well as feedback on draft policies, goals, and strategies.

Throughout the NFK2050 process, the Advisory Committee met in person four times—at key milestones when the planning team was best positioned to incorporate their guidance and input. The NFK2050 team is very grateful for the thoughtful input of so many invested partners and community leaders.



(City of Norfolk)

NFK2050 Advisory Committee Members:

KIM SUDDERTH, Chair

SCOTT BATEMAN, Vice-Chair

PHILLIP HAWKINS, City At Large Community Ambassador

SCOTT GUIRLINGER, Ward 1 Community Ambassador

BJORN KOXVOLD, Ward 2 Community Ambassador

JOYI WINSTON, Ward 3 Community Ambassador

VINCENT HODGES, Ward 4 Community Ambassador

KENNETH PAULSON, Ward 5 Community Ambassador

ENRIQUE FIGUEROA, SuperWard 6 Community Ambassador

MYA BASKERVILLE, SuperWard 7 Community Ambassador

RAY AMORUSO, Hampton Roads Transit Representative

GILBERT BLAND, Urban League of Hampton Roads Representative

JARED CHALK, Hampton Roads Alliance Representative

JENNIFER DAWN, Hampton Roads Realtors Association Representative

SUSAN GIROIS, Norfolk Department of Public Health Representative

KINDRA GREENE, Elizabeth River Trail Foundation Representative

LAURA HANSON, Tidewater Community College Representative

GERALD HUNTER, Norfolk State University Representative

STEVE JONES, Naval Station Norfolk, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) Representative

MARCIA MOCK, Norfolk Federation of Civic Leagues Representative

LINDA PECK, Greater Norfolk Corporation Representative

JOSHUA PURNELL, N.A.A.C.P., Norfolk Branch Representative

DONNA PHANEUF, Norfolk Innovation Corridor Representative

CHAD REED, Old Dominion University Representative

LACY SHIREY, Elizabeth River Project Representative

MARY-CARSON STIFF, Wetlands Watch Representative

MICHELLE WASHINGTON, Hampton Roads Community Foundation Representative

DOREATHA WHITE, Norfolk Public Schools Representative

+ Representatives from City Departments:
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Economic Development; Emergency Management; Housing and Community Development; General Services; Neighborhood Services; Parks and Recreation; Public Works; Resilience; Transportation; Utilities



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.

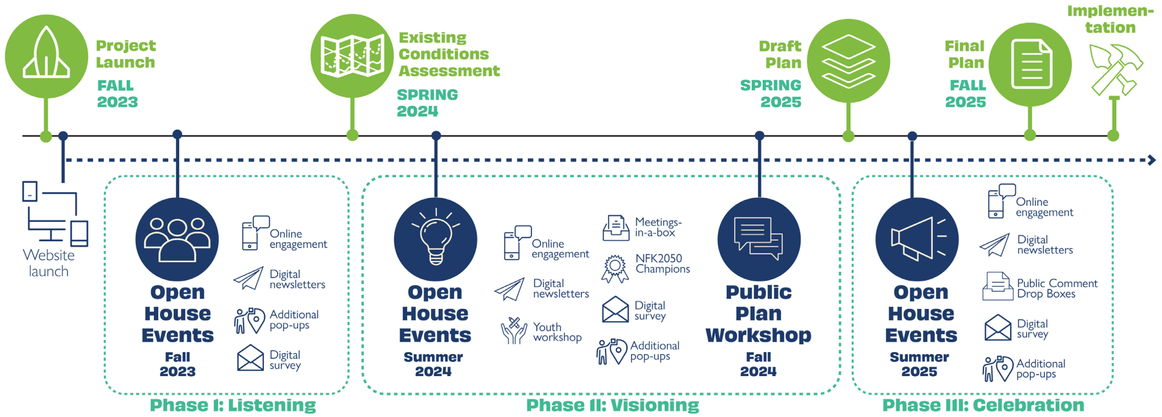
The team convened a standing Engagement Task Force comprised of city staff representing the departments of Communications and Marketing; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; and Neighborhood Services, in addition to members of the consultant team, a representative from the City Planning Commission, and 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 have been reflected in the priorities for Implementation.

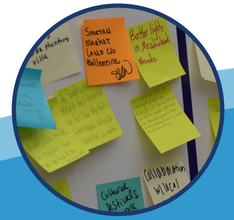
Appendix I - Engagement describes each of these primary tools and their development and deployment in more detail.

✱ For a full summary of the NFK2050 Community Engagement, include tools, champions, and what we've heard, please see Appendix I.

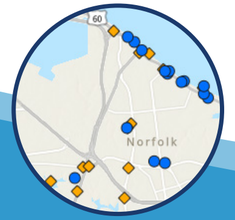
ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE



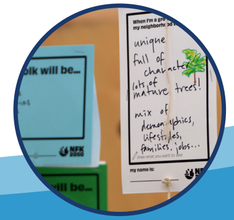






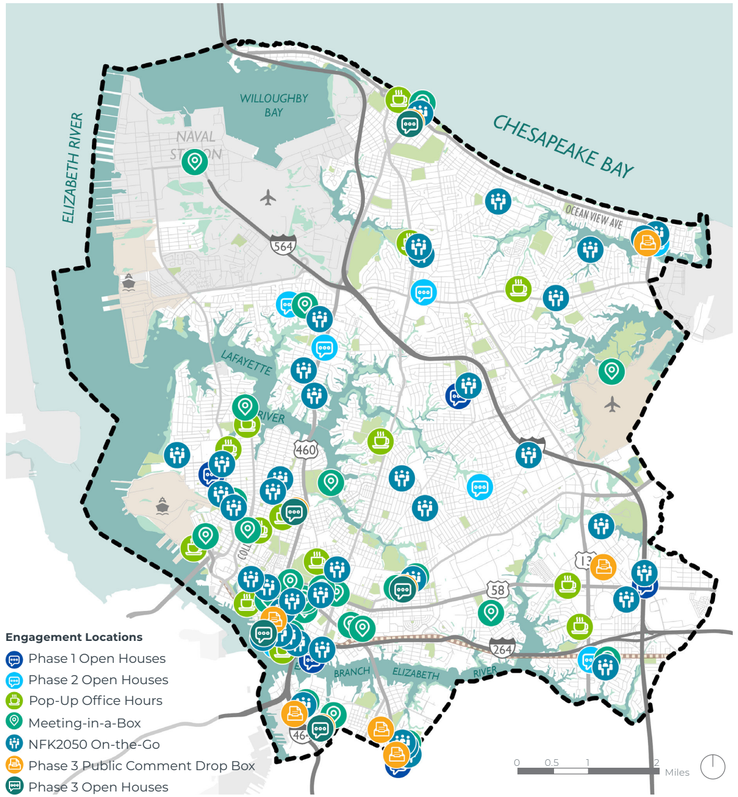












150+ In-Person Engagements

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 in Appendix I.



(WRT)

Figure 1: 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

150+
opportunities to engage in person

2+ years
of community engagement

2100+
touchpoints with the community

700+
engaged through Open Houses and online tools



Existing Conditions

Current Land Use

Norfolk, like all cities, accommodates a variety of uses on its land. Studying the differing ways that Norfolk residents, businesses, industry, and public institutions use the physical space of the city can give an understanding of our collective values and future opportunities.

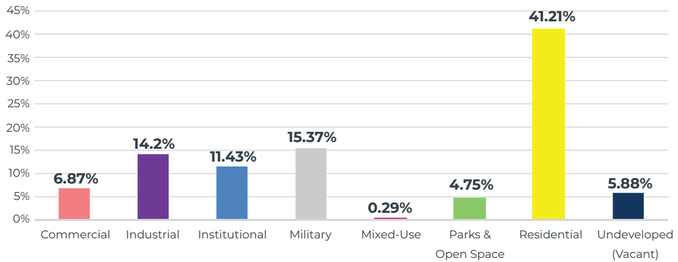


Figure 2: Existing Land Use by Percentage of Overall City Area

Source: City of Norfolk



(WRT)

As of 2022, Norfolk encompasses approximately 66 square miles of land. Of that, residential uses occupy 41% of the city's landmass, followed by 15% for military uses and 14% for industry. Residential districts in Norfolk are primarily comprised of single-family detached housing that is consistent with low to medium density development.

Much of the city's industrial and commercial uses occupy large swaths of land in neighborhoods such as Industrial Park and Military Circle, as well as along major thoroughfares such as Military Highway, East Little Creek Road, and West 23rd Street, outlining the edges of residential neighborhoods. The city's industrial land also encompasses the Port of Virginia in the west that shelters the world's largest shipbuilding and repair base, a thriving coal and bulk trade, and the sixth-largest containerized operation in the United States.

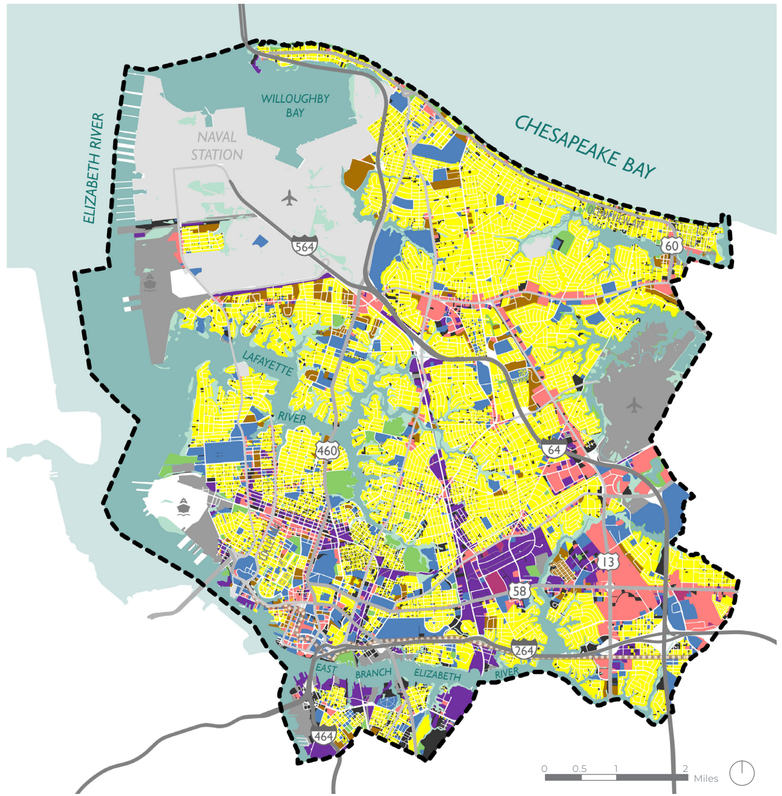


Figure 3: Existing land use, 2022

Source: City of Norfolk

BUILDING ON PAST SUCCESS:

Zoning Code Update (2018)

The 2018 Zoning Ordinance Update was an ambitious and important implementation vehicle for plaNorfolk2030, including new zoning standards that implemented policies and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. New requirements included the following examples:

- Enhanced landscaping, buffering, and screening standards;
- Requirements for open space;
- Development standards focused on form;
- Resilience-based requirements for new development.

Source: City of Norfolk

Current Zoning

Norfolk's Zoning Ordinance is a tool for shaping future development, strengthening the City's commitments to vibrant neighborhoods, economic diversity, and coastal resilience.

The Zoning Ordinance promotes development that enhances Norfolk's resilience—both physical and economic. It acknowledges the city's four established Character Districts and supports more efficient, streamlined development processes. The ordinance takes a proactive and innovative approach to address flooding and positions the Mermaid City as the most resilient coastal community of the 21st Century.

RESILIENCE

The ordinance pioneers a number of approaches in response to the long-term challenges posed by sea level rise, one of which requires development within the city to meet a resilience quotient. The requirement is measured on a point-based system covering three separate resilience elements: risk reduction, stormwater management, and energy resilience. Additionally, new or expanding development must meet minimum first floor elevations above flood level.

DIVERSITY

Current zoning allows for easier mixing of uses in commercial corridors to encourage more vibrant and pedestrian-friendly communities. Housing uses include provisions for more live-work units, allowing for a broader range of home occupations. The construction of accessory dwelling units in certain zoning districts also helps to increase the city's housing supply.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Recognizing that Norfolk is a city that's been growing and evolving over centuries, the City uses a zoning overlay called **Character Districts** to guide developers and property owners towards the most appropriate development patterns in their unique geography, encouraging alignment with existing local character. These four Districts —Downtown, Traditional, Suburban, and Coastal—provide guidance on form, setbacks, building massing, and site configuration to help new projects better fit within the neighborhood fabric in the area.

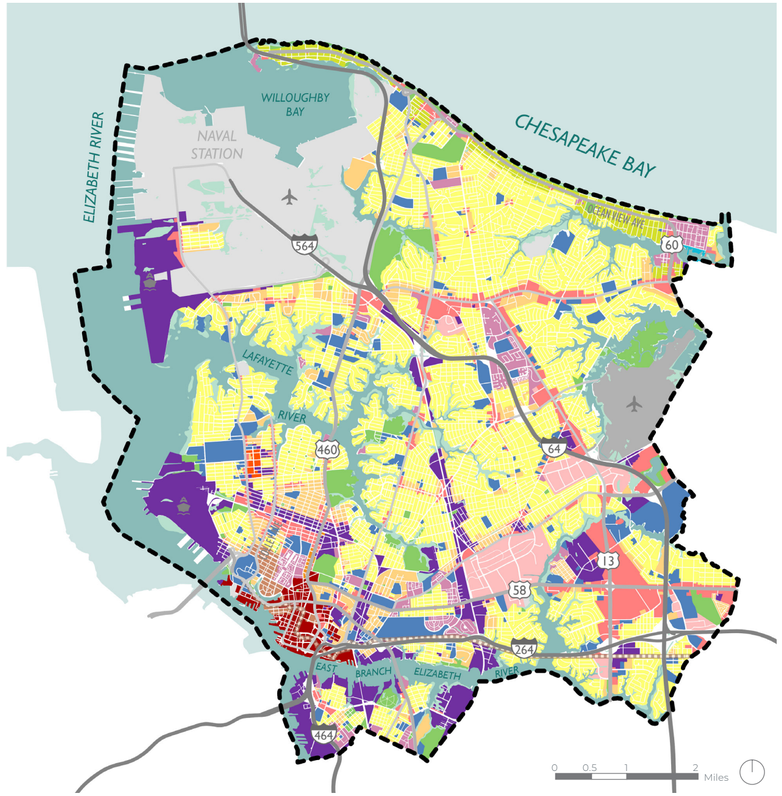


Figure 4: Current zoning (percentages)

Source: City of Norfolk

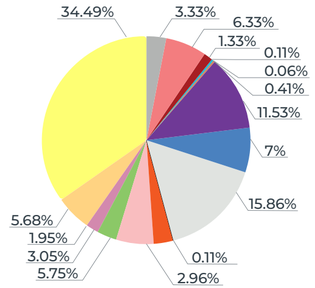


Figure 5: Current zoning

Source: City of Norfolk

CURRENT ZONING

- Airport (3.33%)
- Commercial (6.33%)
- Downtown (1.33%)
- East Beach Harbor (0.11%)
- Granby/Monticello Corridor Mixed-use (0.06%)
- Historic District (0.41%)
- Industrial (11.53%)
- Institutional (7%)
- Military (15.86%)
- Monarch Way (0.11%)
- Office (2.96%)
- Open Space (5.75%)
- Planned Development (3.05%)
- Residential Coastal (1.95%)
- Residential Multi-Family (5.68%)
- Residential Single-Family (34.49%)
- City limits
- Military
- Seaport/Airport
- Light rail
- Water
- Wetlands

Demographic Snapshot

GROWTH

Norfolk's population, stable for decades, has seen a slight decline since 2010. The city observed a 2.4% decrease from 2010 to 2022, while the population of Virginia and the Greater Hampton Roads region grew by 7.79% and 4.8% (respectively) in the same period. It should be noted that the regular deployments of large numbers of Norfolk's military population can make truly accurate population counts difficult.

Statewide, the past year marked the slowest growth rate for Virginia. While this can be partially attributed to a declining birth rate (13,000 more births than deaths in 2022 as compared to 27,000 in 2019), since the COVID-19 pandemic, more people are leaving larger metro areas in favor of smaller southern states. This national trend of migration out from cities into suburbs and outlying regions, for example, helped boost the number of residents in Suffolk past 100,000 in 2023 (Weldon Cooper Center, University of Virginia).

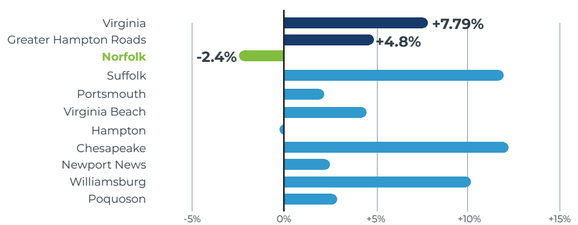


Figure 6: Regional growth rate, 2010-2022

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-year Estimates, 2010-2022

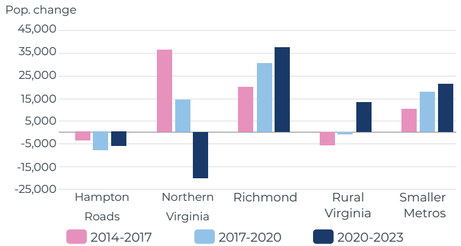


Figure 7: Net Migration by Region in Virginia

Source: Weldon Cooper Center Population Estimates

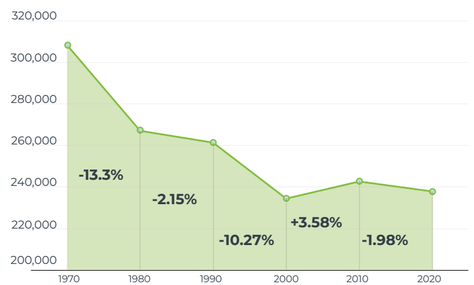


Figure 8: Population change in Norfolk, 1970-2020

Source: CivicLab, City of Norfolk

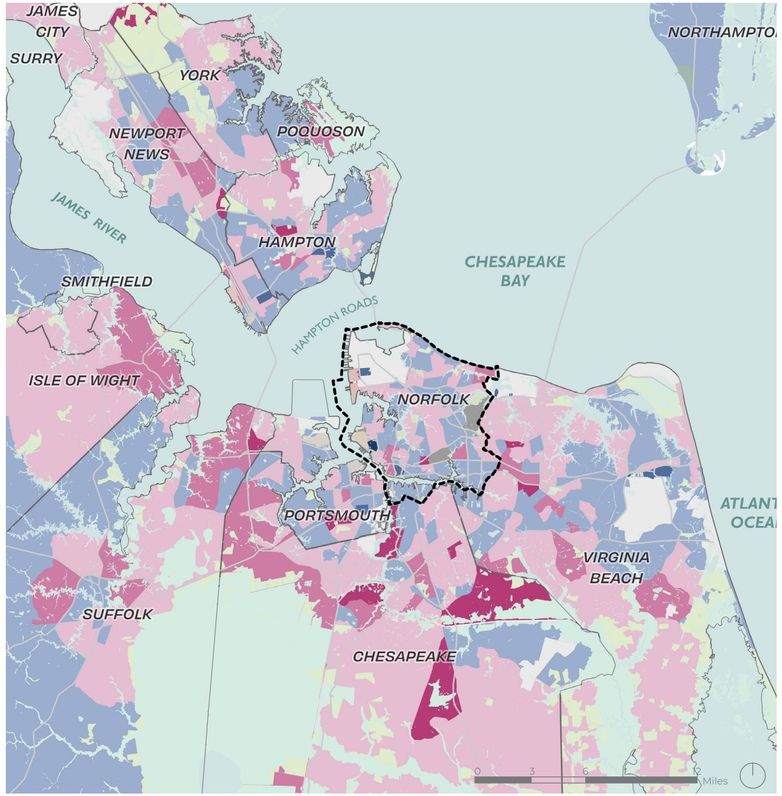


Figure 9: Population Change 2010-2022

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-year Estimates, 2010-2022

Population change 2010-2022

- >50% decrease
- 25%-49% decrease
- 1%-24% decrease
- No change
- 1%-24% increase
- 25%-49% increase
- >50% increase
- No population/unknown

- City limits
- Military
- Seaport/Airport
- Light rail
- Water
- Wetlands



Pride Fest, 2023 (City of Norfolk)

> **We have a pretty diverse neighborhood. There are kids who are white, Hispanic, and then some of Asian origins. I feel like we have stumbled upon a magical little community. It's not perfect, but it is great!**
>
> — Norfolk resident, Workshop #1, October 2023

Age

Norfolk's population is aging. Between 2010 and 2022, the population above 65 years of age increased by 3.4% while those under 18 decreased by 1%. The median age has grown from 29.7 to 32.2 as of 2022. The city also saw a decline in public school enrollment rate by 18.6% as compared to the 7.5% decline in the Hampton Roads region (Virginia Department of Education, Fall Membership 2010-2011 & 2021-2022).

Diversity

Norfolk is becoming more Hispanic and more multi-racial. While 42% of Norfolkians are white, the city observed an increase in Asian, Hispanic, and multi-racial populations in the last decade. Neighborhoods like Chesapeake Gardens and Glenwood Park are home to the largest concentrations of Hispanic and Asian communities in Norfolk.

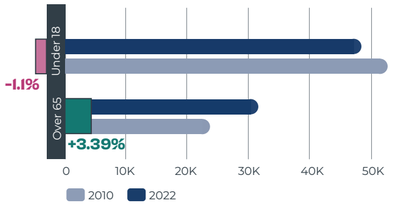


Figure 10: Change in youth and senior population between 2010 and 2022

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-year Estimates, 2010 and 2022

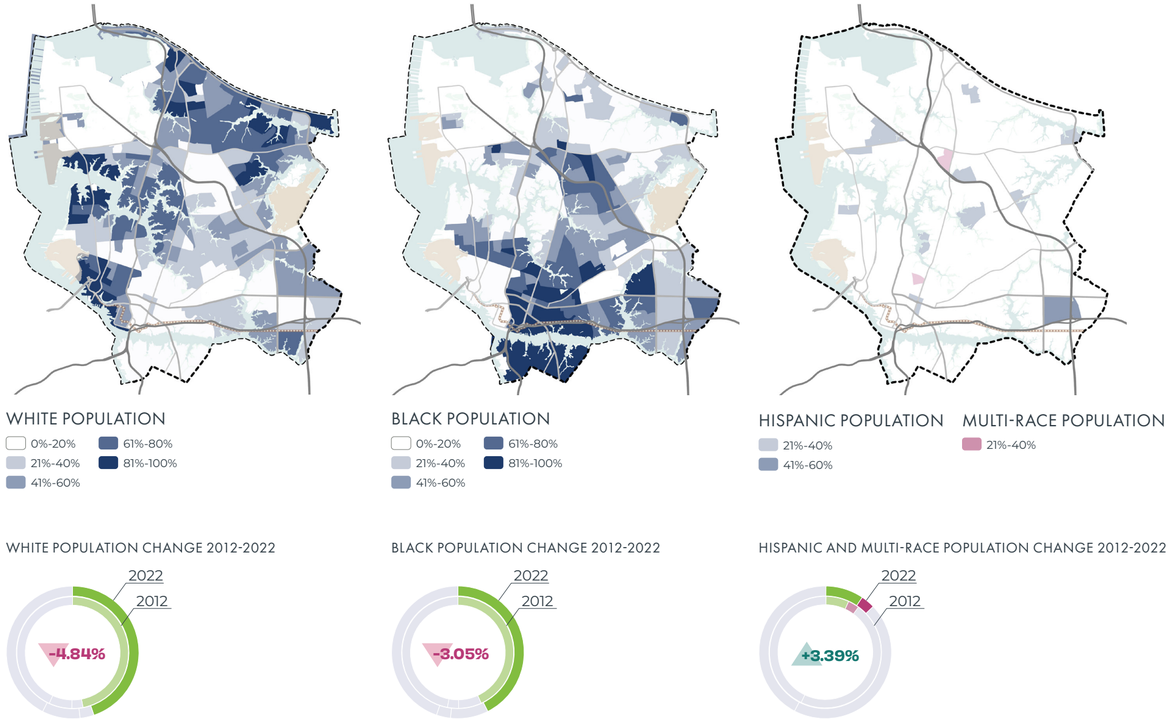


Figure 11: Racial/ethnic make-up of Norfolk, 2022

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-year Estimates, 2010 and 2022



30%
of Norfolk's residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher

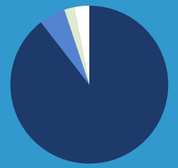
- Less than high school
- High school or equiv.
- Some college
- Assoc./Prof. degree
- Bachelors
- Masters



52%
of Norfolk's residents were born in Virginia

41.5%
moved from other states within the US

- Born in VA
- Born in another US State
- Foreign-born US Citizen
- Not US Citizen



89%
of Norfolk's residents speak only English

- Speak only English
- Speak Spanish
- Speak Indo-European
- Speak Asian

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-year Estimates, 2022

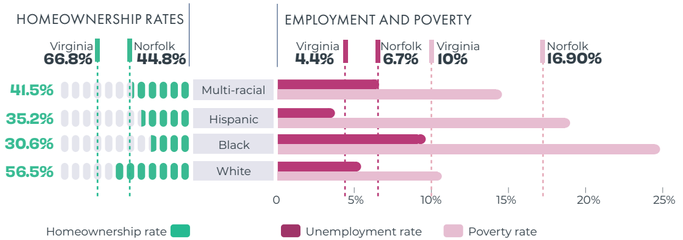


Figure 12: Social inequities in poverty, unemployment, and homeownership rates by race/ethnicity

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Yr Estimates 2022

EQUITY

Norfolk has a higher rate of poverty and unemployment than Virginia on average. With a 16.9% poverty rate, Norfolk has a significantly larger population living below poverty level compared to the 10% state average.

Economic opportunities vary significantly across racial lines. In Norfolk, where the population is 42% white and 40% Black, a disproportionate number of residents living below the poverty level are Black — 21,544 Black residents are living below poverty level, the highest in the city and over twice the number of white residents in similar circumstances. This inequality extends to housing security, with white residents having a median household income of $76,706 compared to $44,814 for Black residents, which is significantly below the city average of $60,998. Such disparities severely affect the ability of Black residents to accumulate wealth, evidenced by a homeownership rate of just 30.6% among Black Norfolk residents.

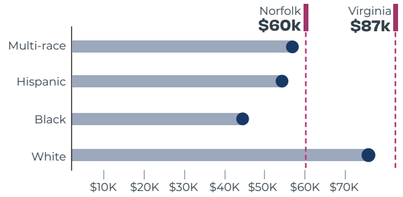


Figure 13: Median household income by race/ethnicity

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Yr Estimates 2022



* For a full summary of the NFK2050 Existing Conditions, please see Appendix II.

National Night Out 2023 (City of Norfolk)

A BRIEF HISTORY OF NORFOLK

As one of the first areas of settlement for European colonists in the US, the Hampton Roads region has a long, deep, and rich history. Looking back at four centuries of urban development and the diversity of people who have called Norfolk home helps us to understand who we are today: with that shared past we can then look forward to a bright future.



1607: "Virginia's First Port" established at Jamestown

INDIGENOUS SETTLEMENTS: Chesepian Indians Destroyed by Chief Powhatan ~1607

1637: New Norfolk County splits into Upper and Lower Norfolk Counties

1680: Norfolk Designated a Port

1682: The deed establishing the Towne of Lower Norfolk County recorded

1736: English County of Norfolk formally incorporated



1776: Burning of Norfolk by Lord Dunmore

1795: Fort Norfolk Construction

1812: War of 1812 Battle of Craney Island

1822: Fort Monroe construction



1845: Norfolk incorporated as a city



1851: Norfolk & Petersburg Rail line extended into Norfolk

1862: "Battle of the Ironclads" USS Monitor and CSS Virginia (formerly USS Merrimack)

1883: Norfolk Southern Railroad founded - First coal from West Virginia Arrives

1886: First coal pier opens at N&W Coal Yards at Lambert's Point



1894: First electrically driven streetcars in Norfolk



1907: Jamestown Exposition

1911: Booker T. Washington High School Opens (all-Black)



1917: Naval Station Norfolk Opens

1920-1930: Norfolk began converting all-white schools to all-Black schools as white residents moved to Ocean View, Ghent, Larchmont, Edgewater

1930: ODU established as Norfolk division of College of William & Mary

1940: Norfolk City Council votes to create the Norfolk Housing Authority Grant funded to construct 500 military housing units (Merrimac Park)



1946: VA Development Law passes changing Norfolk Housing Authority to NRHA to focus on urban development





1939-1945: WWII (NN Shipyard employed 43,000 people, built 101 vessels and repaired 6,850 others)





1949: Norfolk and Galveston TX are first cities to receive public funding under the Federal Housing Act

1950: Norfolk begins "Project One"- Clearing slums in present-day St. Paul's Quadrant; NRHA creates Tidewater Gardens public housing

1959: After the Virginia massive resistance to school desegregation "The Norfolk 17" were the first African-American students to enter six previously all-white middle and high schools in Norfolk.

1970: East Ghent and Huntersville redevelopment projects

1972: Berkley redevelopment project

1973: Park Place conservation plan



1976: Ghent Square - first residents

1977: Park Terrace Opens

1977: Church St. redevelopment

1983: Waterside Opens



1986: Middletowne Arch opens on the site once occupied by Liberty Park

1986: Freemason Harbor condos

1989: East Beach Redevelopment



2011: Opening of the Tide light rail - first light rail system in Virginia

2012: New South Norfolk Jordan Bridge Opens

2016: Toll Relief Program created for low-income Portsmouth & Norfolk residents

300,000

TODAY

300K
250K
200K
150K
100K
50K

1600 1800 1850 1900 1920 1950 1970 1980 2000 2020

Population Growth

THE LAST 25 YEARS IN NORFOLK

NFK2050 will be official policy for the City of Norfolk for the next 25 years. Long-range and comprehensive planning can feel abstract, so it can be helpful to look back to see just how much can change in a city across a similar timespan. Norfolk has had a significant amount of development, infrastructure, and environmental changes since 1999, some of which are highlighted here for illustration:

1999

- MacArthur Mall Opens
- SR 44 Changed to I-264
- Hurricane Floyd
- Mermaid Adopted as City Symbol



2000

- Broad Creek Hope VI Award & Redevelopment Begins
- POP: 234,403 (-10.3% from 1990)
- NORVA Reopens as Concert Venue



9/11

2001

- USS Wisconsin Opens as Museum Attraction
- Heritage at Freemason (Downtown 184 units)

2002

- 150 West Main Opens 20-Story Office Tower



2003



- Hurricane Isabel
- NATO Act HQ Built in Norfolk

2004

- East Beach Redevelopment Begins Construction
- Attucks Theatre opens



2006



- Sentara Heart Hospital Opens SE VA's Only Heart Hospital

2007

- Half Moone Cruise Terminal Opens
- Norfolk Ford Assembly Plant Closes



National Recession

2009

- Nor'Ida Nor'easter Storm

2010

- Belmont at Freemason Opens (Downtown 239 Units)
- POP: 242,803 (+3.6% from 2000)



2011

- VA Renaissance Center Opens at former Ford Plant
- TIDE Light Rail Transit Opens
- Hurricane Irene
- Wells Fargo Tower & Monticello station Apts (Downtown 178 units)

Hurricane Sandy

2012

- Amtrak Intercity Train Service Returns



- Hurricane Sandy

2014

- Metro on Granby (Downtown 185 Units)
- The Wainwright Building (Downtown 126 Units)
- East Beach Marina Apts (Ocean View 137 Units)



2015

- Slover Library Opens
- Dutch Dialogues
- Law Building (Downtown 70 Units)
- Rockefeller Building (Downtown 126 Units)
- Broad Creek Hope VI Redevelopment Complete

2016



- Hurricane Matthew
- The Loraine (Downtown 56 Units)
- Virginia Building (Downtown 32 Units)

2017



- Hilton (The Main) Opens
- Norfolk Premium Outlets Open
- NDRC Ohio Creek Neighborhood Resilience Project Awarded
- Edge at 450 (Downtown 156 Units)
- Bank of America Tower Renovation ICON Norfolk (Downtown 275 Units)



2018

- NEON Arts Apts (Downtown 48 units)
- Olde Huntersville Plan Book
- Norfolk Southern Announces HQ Relocation to Atlanta

2019

- IKEA Norfolk Opens



- Bay Oaks Park Opens
- Pinewell Station Apts (Ocean View 145 units)



COVID-19 Pandemic

2020

- POP: 238,005 (-2% from 2010)
- Open Norfolk Outdoor Dining Initiative

2021

- Acclaim at East Beach Apts (Ocean View 132 units)



2023

- Duke Grace Building (Downtown 30 units)
- NDRC Ohio Creek Neighborhood Resilience Project Completed
- MacArthur Mall for sale acquired by City of Norfolk
- Fairwinds Landing begins Construction

2024

- FUSION at NEON (Downtown 233 units)
- Gravity on 400 (Downtown 273 units)
- Acclaim at East Beach II Apts (Ocean View 80 units)

- Year of events
- Economic development
- Housing/neighborhood
- Environmental quality
- Transportation

Projections to 2050

Why Look Forward?

Data can tell us not only where we are currently, but can help us make informed and plausible assumptions about where Norfolk might be by 2050—just 25 years from now.



When we conduct future projection analyses, we see a city that is stable, but not growing. Norfolk continues to offer a diverse mix of jobs and housing, though perhaps not at the scale needed to achieve broad-based prosperity. Meanwhile, rising sea levels and persistent flooding create challenges for residents across all income levels. In broad terms, Norfolk is doing well, yet concerns remain.



Our community envisions a thriving city, one that strives for greater opportunity, resilience, and growth, and we can take action to adjust our course accordingly. At its core, comprehensive planning is about coordinating efforts citywide with a broad coalition of partners to pull in the same direction and **make change happen in a targeted and concerted way.** The future envisioned by NFK2050 and its community is bright, and the choices we make around land use, development, and the economy will be key to realizing it.

Population Projections

According to the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center, by 2050 the city is estimated to have approximately 237,000 residents, a significant drop from current estimates (245,406). Compared to the state of Virginia as a whole (17% projected growth), and neighboring cities of Chesapeake (23% projected growth) and Virginia Beach (7% projected growth), Norfolk is projected to lag behind its neighbors in growth.

The Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) similarly has projected a static population or slight decline in the majority of the city by the year 2045, as part of their long-range transportation planning (Fig.15, opposite). This data shows the probability that **the "exurbs" (developing areas far from the urban core) in the south sides of Norfolk's neighboring cities will likely see the sharpest growth, as residents presumably relocate to newly developing areas.**

Norfolk's population is projected to remain stable but not increase between now and 2050.

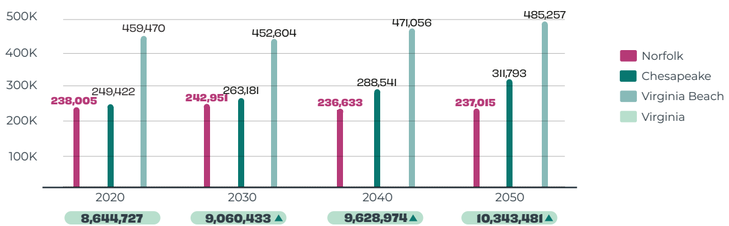


Figure 14: Population change: 2020-2050 (projected)

Source: Weldon Cooper Center Population Estimates



(City of Norfolk)

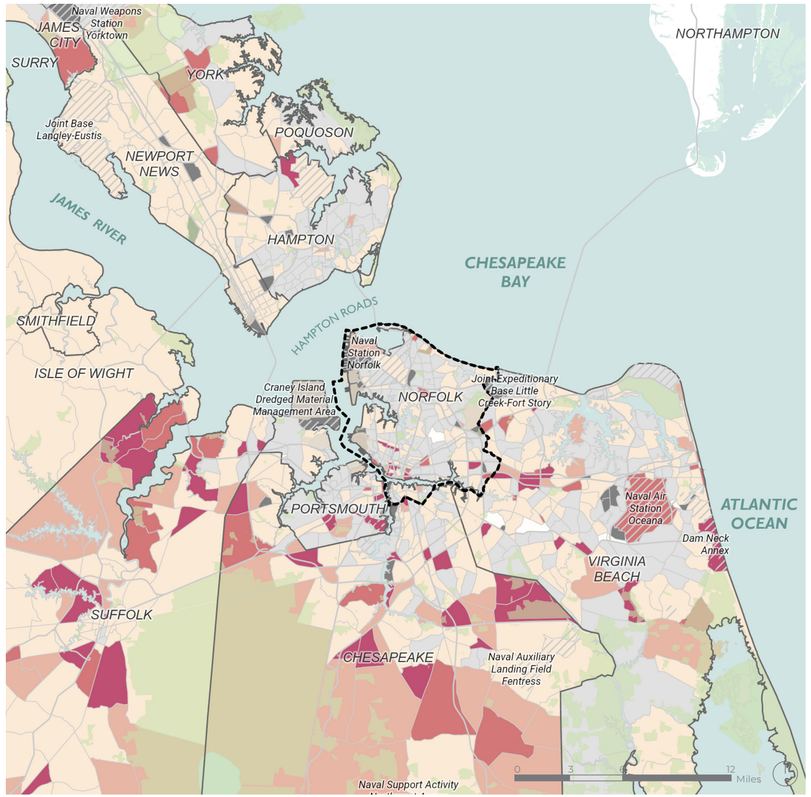


Figure 15: Regional population: projected change from 2015-2045

Source: HRTPO, 2019

POPULATION CHANGE 2015-2045 BY TAZ

- Decline
- 0% change
- 1%-50% increase
- 51%-100% increase
- 101%-200% increase
- >200% increase
- No population
- City limits
- Military
- Seaport/Airport
- Light rail
- Water
- Wetlands



Norfolk is the home of several large regional job anchors including the Port of Virginia (City of Norfolk)

Employment Projections

While there is evidence of job growth in neighboring counties that may pose a competitive threat to Norfolk's industry sectors, Norfolk is showing signs of job growth in certain key areas. **The city's economic development efforts should focus on strengthening and diversifying its key industries, improving job retention, and enhancing its competitive advantages** to mitigate concerns about industry migration.

It is also crucial to consider broader regional economic dynamics, as collaborative efforts across the region may bolster resilience against the potential migration of industries.

Current demographics in Norfolk show higher percentages of workers with high school diplomas and associate degrees, rather than those with bachelor's degrees. **Future employment strategies should target sectors offering well-paying jobs without requiring a bachelor's degree.** Industries like offshore wind are comprised mostly of these types of jobs not requiring a bachelor's degree. These industries provide ample manufacturing jobs and, importantly, they leverage existing assets in Norfolk: these jobs can be accommodated by existing shipyards, which support secondary steel components; they support local human capital and talent being created at Norfolk-based and regional community colleges, trade schools, and universities; and they build off of historic and existing maritime and defense industries.

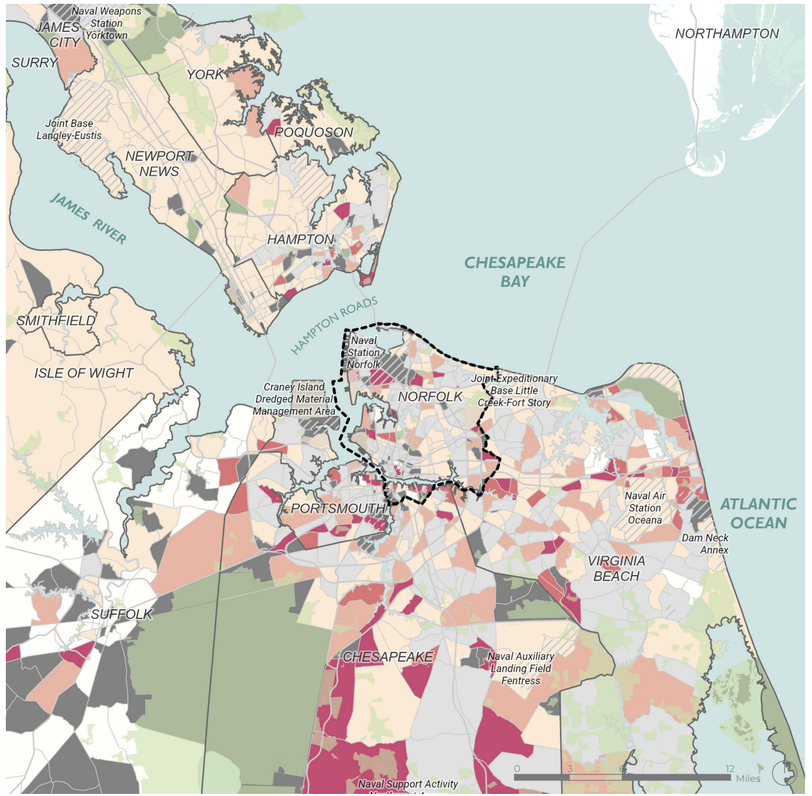


Figure 16: Regional employment: Projected change from 2015-2045

Source: HRTPO, 2019

PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT CHANGE 2015-2045 BY TAZ

- Decline
- 0% change
- 1%-50% increase
- 51%-100% increase
- 101%-200% increase
- >200% increase
- No data
- City limits
- Military
- Seaport/Airport
- Light rail
- Water
- Wetlands

Flooding Risk and Planning Horizons

Flood risk is the most prominent climate risk in Norfolk, and is expected to intensify as sea levels rise. Higher sea levels will lead to more frequent tidal flood events, eventually causing daily or permanent flooding in certain areas and exacerbating flood impacts from coastal storms.

The speed and magnitude of Sea Level Rise (SLR) are uncertain. NFK2050's planning approach must consider different climate models, time horizons, and probabilities.

To navigate this variable within the planning process, the NFK2050 team has established a framework for selecting appropriate models, defining probability ranges, and determining time horizons—while also addressing the inherent uncertainties of both climate projections and future adaptation efforts.

- **Models and probability ranges:** For Norfolk and the Hampton Roads area as a whole, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) 2017 model has been used in the most recent planning efforts (the Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan, 2021). As the latest available scientific data, a 2022 update is proposed for this planning effort, with the "Intermediate" scenario as the basis. In addition, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) projects SLR in Coastal Virginia up to the year 2050. For the purposes of this plan, the VIMS projection is used for 2050, and NOAA's 2022 Intermediate projection is used beyond that date.
- **Year to plan for:** The time horizon of this Plan is 2050, but the actual lifespan of a home is more than 50 years. The time horizon for sea level rise must be at least 50 years, plus the planning span, resulting in the year **2100.**



Flooded street in Norfolk (WRT)

- **Managing Sea Level Rise uncertainty:** The proposed SLR model and time horizon comes with a caveat: SLR will continue after 2100, although we cannot know to what extent and with what speed. The 50-year time horizon allows for ample time to adapt to new circumstances at a later stage; however, for investments with a longer lifespan, a longer time horizon should be taken into account. There is also a chance that actual SLR and flood risk are overestimated or underestimated. Future modeling can make estimates with more precision. It is essential to acknowledge this chance now and, in the future, reassess the level of uncertainty as new models become available (see Fig.17 to the right for a summary).
- **Resilience:** While it is expected that measures to protect against or adapt to SLR, storm surge, and urban flooding will be implemented, the specific strategies and their timelines have yet to be finalized. Presenting only inundation and flood risk maps—without referencing anticipated protective measures—could create the false impression that Norfolk is destined to be flooded. This may erode public confidence in the city's long-term viability. To counter this, flood maps should incorporate the best available estimates of planned or proposed adaptation and mitigation measures.

In response to projected rising sea levels through 2100, NFK2050 will proactively plan, design, and adapt.

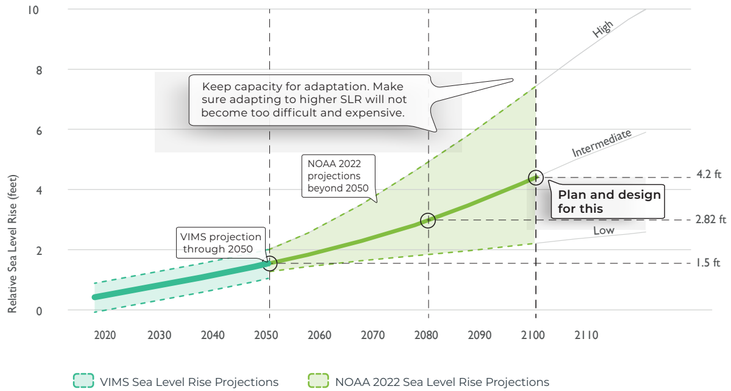


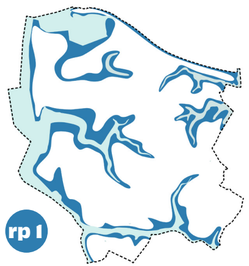
Figure 17: Sea Level Rise Scenarios for Sewells Point, Norfolk

Source: Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS); NOAA 2022; ONE Architecture

Risk Profile Overlays

NFK2050 recognizes the uncertainty of flood scenarios and the need to plan for an unknown future.

Flood risk varies across the city. To complement the strong work already incorporated in Vision 2100's assessment of risk (Figure 18), the NFK2050 team also developed four "risk profile" analyses. These profiles are based on susceptibility to flood risks (considering both tidal and storm surge flooding), and the probable implementation of future flood protection projects, helping us understand what land use decisions and adaptation measures work best where in the city.



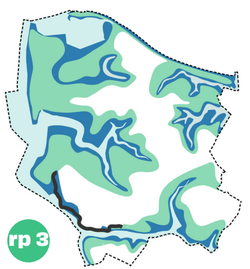
Risk Profile 1: Tidal Flooding

This risk profile identifies areas vulnerable to chronic inundation from sea level rise (SLR) during high tides, particularly neighborhoods along the Lafayette River and low-lying coastal zones. Recurrent tidal flooding could submerge these areas daily under intermediate SLR scenarios. The extent of this overlay builds on, and refines, Vision 2100's yellow zone – Adapting to Rising Waters. Actions here focus on protecting most vulnerable populations and avoiding recurring damages, while allowing for the restoration of shoreline ecologies.



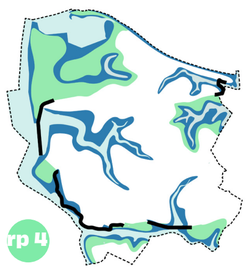
Risk Profile 2: Storm Surge

Risk Profile 2 focuses on areas exposed to potentially devastating storm surges, such as Downtown's Elizabeth River waterfront and Ocean View. Though low in probability at the current estimations, without intervention, the levels of flood in these areas can raise up to 10 ft during a significant storm, necessitating investments in the resilience of physical assets and local communities.



Risk Profile 3: Downtown Protection

While much of Norfolk falls under Risk Profile 2, **this can change in the future if coastal protection is constructed.** The US Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Norfolk are developing plans to protect the Downtown areas, extending and upgrading the existing Downtown Floodwall to protect a larger area from coastal storms. After the completion of such a project, Risk Profile 3 shows that for a large part of Downtown, flood risk is greatly reduced.



Risk Profile 4: CSRM Implementation

If all currently-projected Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) components — including 8 miles of floodwalls, 11 tide gates, and pump stations — were to be implemented, storm surge flood risk would be greatly reduced in an even larger area (e.g., The Hague, East Ocean View). Residual flooding may still occur during tidal events.

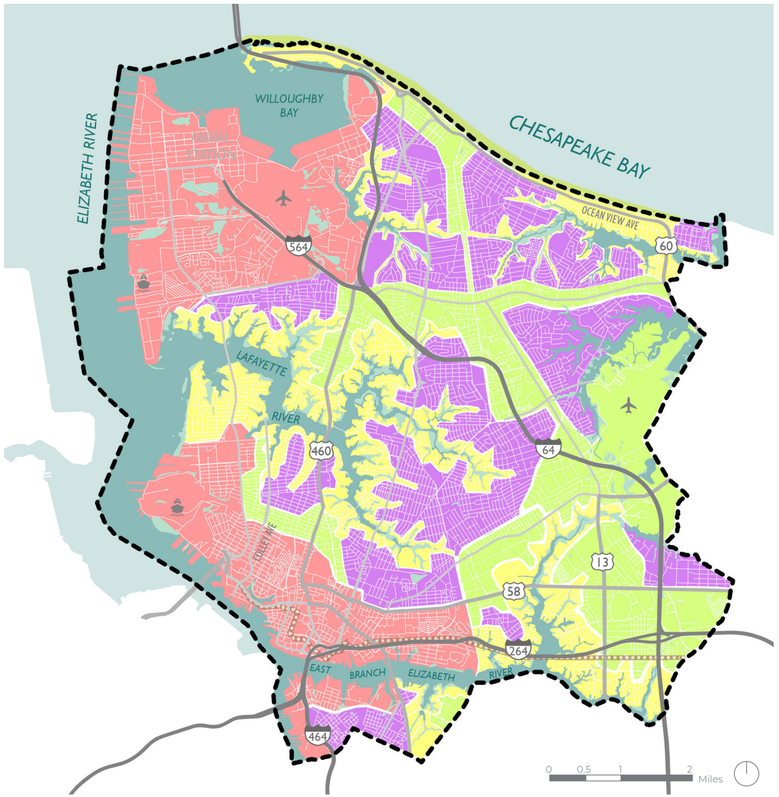


Figure 18: Vision 2100 areas, underpinning much of NFK2050's land use and policy recommendations.
Source: City of Norfolk

VISION 2100 AREAS:

Enhancing Economic Engines

These areas have key economic assets essential to the city's future. Major land use policy and infrastructure investments to protect these areas should encourage additional dense mixed-use development in these areas.

Adapting to Rising Waters

Established neighborhoods that experience more frequent flooding. The city should explore new and innovative technologies to help reduce flood risk and focus on investments aimed at extending the resilience of key infrastructure.

Designing New Urban Centers

Areas at low risk of coastal flooding and that have great potential for high density, mixed-use and mixed income development. These areas are prime opportunities for creating walkable, bikeable, transit-rich communities. The City should encourage transformational development in these areas.

Establishing Neighborhoods of the Future

Established neighborhoods at less risk of coastal flooding. The City should make investments that improve connections between these areas and key economic assets to ensure these neighborhoods can continue to thrive.

City limits
Military
Seaport/Airport
Light rail
Water
Wetlands

Sea Level Rise & Fiscal Impacts

Water is deeply embedded in the life and culture of Norfolk. Adapting to it—and fostering a positive relationship with it—will be critical to the city's future success.

Norfolk has one of the fastest rates of sea level rise on the East Coast, driven largely by the combined impacts of a changing climate and land subsidence. Sea level rise poses significant threats to Norfolk's property tax base through both permanent flooding by tidal inundation and precipitation-induced flooding as a result of storm surge. Acting now to address sea level rise will ensure a more resilient future for Norfolk.

Figures 19, 20, and 21 outline the potential impacts of sea level rise on properties. By 2050, oceans are anticipated to rise by at least 1.5 ft. Without additional adaptation measures, **tidal inundation is projected to permanently flood approximately 1.8 square miles, and reduce Norfolk's property tax base by $615 million.** In addition, storm surge flooding expands to an additional 4.5 square miles of taxable city land, and threatens the property values of approximately $5.1 billion in appraised value.

If sea level rise continues to accelerate, it has the potential to impact over half of the city area and its property tax base. These projections illustrate the urgent need for cultivating more efficient and productive land uses.

As we look forward to Norfolk's future, incorporating development decisions that promote building more in less space will be imperative for building the city's resilience to climate change and other challenges.

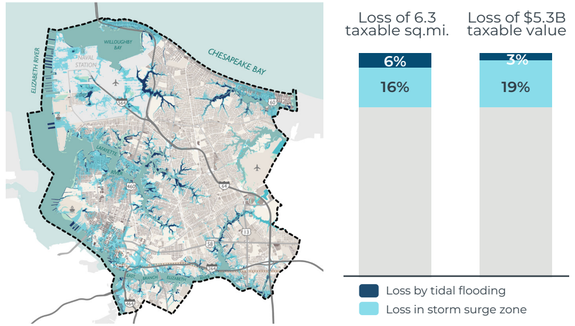


Figure 19: Sea level rise and storm surge risk, 2050 projections (without protective infrastructure in place)

Source: VIMS; City of Norfolk Assessor, 2023; ONE Architecture

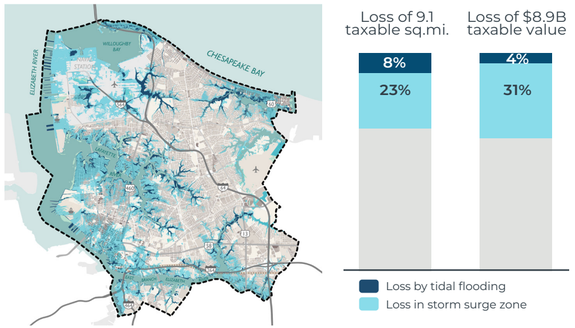


Figure 20: Sea level rise and storm surge risk, 2080 projections (without protective infrastructure in place)

Source: NOAA, 2022; City of Norfolk Assessor, 2023; ONE Architecture

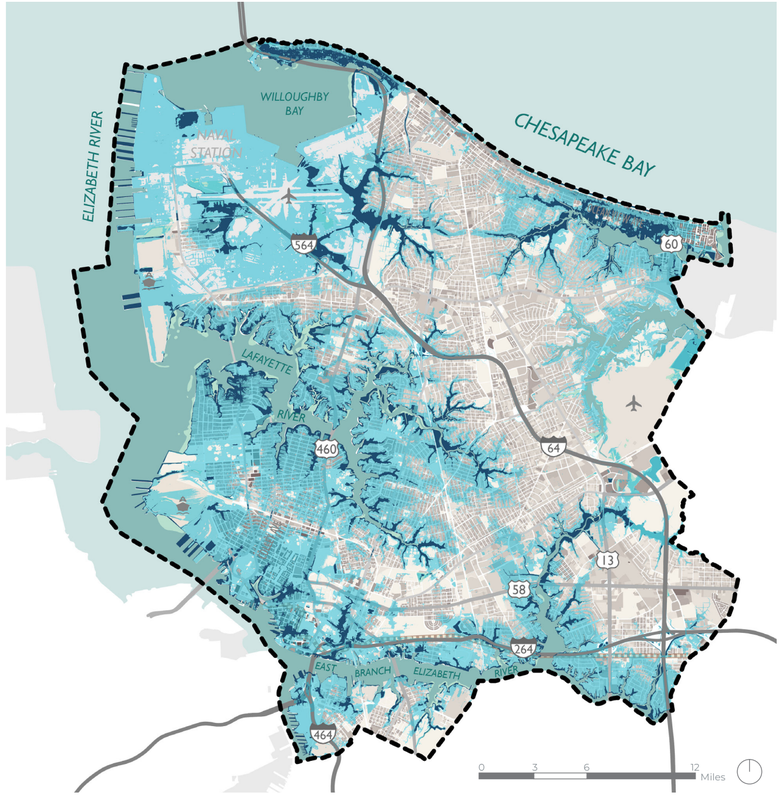
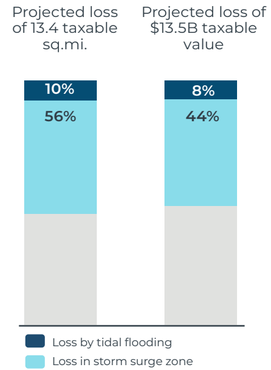


Figure 21: Sea level rise and storm surge risk, 2100 projections (without protective infrastructure in place)

Source: NOAA, 2022; City of Norfolk Assessor, 2023; ONE Architecture



FLOODING RISK

- Tidal inundation
- Storm surge
- City limits
- Military
- Seaport/Airport
- Light rail
- Water
- Wetlands

Adjusting Course

The Time to Plan is Now

Norfolk has a range of plausible paths forward based on our current trajectory, but we get to write our future together. We can seize this opportunity to shape our city as a united community, and to build a Norfolk that meets the needs of all our residents, for today and tomorrow.

We know our city is special. We have diverse neighbors, strong cultural assets, a singular sense of identity, a deep and rich history, and a meaningful connection to water all around us. We have world-class economic anchors, parks and tree canopies across the city, a diversity of housing, a strong urban downtown, the popular Elizabeth River Trail, and the only light rail transit system in the Commonwealth.

Norfolk is doing well, but there are always opportunities for improvement to make a more equitable and resilient city for all our neighbors. Housing is becoming less affordable nationwide, and Norfolk is no exception. Our roadways and bike lanes don't always connect seamlessly, and rising waters with increased flood events further divide our close-knit neighborhoods from each other. Economically, the jobs available in the city do not always align with the skills and training of our own residents, making it harder to earn a living wage and raise a family.

In 2025, Norfolk is at an inflection point, and the NFK2050 planning process offers an opportunity to realign land use, development, and economic policies to ensure the city is moving in the right direction.

Grounded in a thorough assessment of current conditions and a data-driven understanding of where our trajectory may be pointing, **it's now time to find out where we want to go from here.** To do this, we consulted our diverse community voices to understand what their future city looks and feels like—and how we might make it happen together.



(City of Norfolk)

02 Where We Want to Go

PLAN VISION AND FRAMEWORK

We can't plan for 2050 without a strong guiding star to help us chart our course.

Building on the broad feedback we heard from Norfolk's communities, we can create a consolidated resident-rooted vision for the future, begin a shared understanding for how that future might take shape, and examine ways that the Plan itself may lead us in that direction.



(City of Norfolk)

Emerging Themes

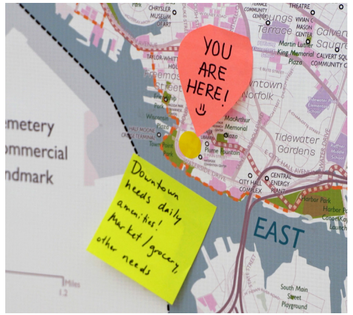
What Does NFK2050 Need to Accomplish?

Throughout the planning process, one of the primary questions asked of all participants, residents, stakeholders, and leaders was what Norfolk should be in 25 years. **Who do we want to become?** What aspects of who we are now should hold strong, and what need to evolve?

Across all our discussions, several cross-cutting themes consistently emerged in the evolving vision for the city's future. **These themes chart the course for what this Plan needs to accomplish,** and they act as underlying assumptions woven throughout the rest of the document.



(City of Norfolk)



(WRT)

NFK2050 needs to...

EMBRACE CHANGE:

Many unexpected shifts may occur in the next 25 years. **A long-range plan has to anticipate change, but set a flexible path forward.** In our Future Land Use planning and Pillar-specific recommendations, we have to strike a balance between being visionary and being actionable—between defining a clear future direction and allowing flexibility for multiple potential pathways to reach it. What results is a forward-looking plan that can be durable and nimble to better navigate the uncertainties that may face our city through 2050.

ENCOURAGE GROWTH:

A census analysis shows that Norfolk's population has held relatively steady for several decades. Meanwhile, its neighbors—and the region—are growing.

Although some aspects of growth can be challenging to manage, many of the actions residents have asked for will be easier to achieve with more people: a higher tax base to pay for infrastructure and resilience projects, walkable communities with local neighborhood amenities, and more of an ecosystem to support small businesses.

Though literal growth beyond the current city boundary is not feasible, our analysis determined that **there is more room to grow within the current city boundaries of Norfolk than one might think.** The city's streets, parcels, water and sewer infrastructure, and other physical framework were built to support the 1960s peak population of 300,000.

Stimulating growth through welcoming new residents, retaining current families, and generally being a city of choice—where people of all backgrounds want to move and put down roots—is a key underlying assumption of NFK2050.

CONTRIBUTE TO A CULTURE SHIFT:

The City of Norfolk will lead the efforts to spearhead NFK2050 and its implementation, but the city can't build the community's vision alone. By 2050, Norfolk and its residents may need to embrace a cultural shift: toward grassroots, bottom-up approaches to resilience and sustainability; away from reliance on automobiles; toward a broad perception of Norfolk as a welcoming, family-friendly city; and toward greater acceptance of diverse housing types and a gentle increase in density to accommodate all who wish to live here.

The city's actions are important, but Norfolk residents can help to make the city the place we collectively envision, and our current culture and trajectory may have to shift accordingly to do so.

Emerging Themes & Plan Vision

NFK2050 needs to...

ACKNOWLEDGE RISK:

Norfolk is already a national leader in resilience planning, but environmental threats continue to intensify. Sea levels and flood events will continue to encroach on our properties and our public assets. The cost of the infrastructure and mitigation measures needed to protect our city and our most vulnerable neighbors needs to come from a wide range of sources. In our land use and development decisions, **we need to be clear-eyed about the potential for risk, even as we commit to protecting our neighbors.**

THINK LIKE A REGION:

Norfolk is one of many unique cities in the constellation that makes up the Hampton Roads region, but Norfolk's downtown, naval base and other major jobs centers, airport, and many diverse neighborhoods and residents all contribute to its role as the urban heart of the region.

Though a citywide plan adopted by the City of Norfolk cannot govern neighboring municipalities, **NFK2050 is intentional about setting land use and policy ideas that will be collaborative with our neighbors** and anticipate future physical, social, and economic connections across our borders and bridges.

BUILD ON HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE:

In an era when many workers can choose to take root where they wish, why might they choose Norfolk? When our young residents come of age, what keeps them here? When military families have concluded their tours of duty, why might they stay rooted in our city?

The answer has to be in our overall quality of life: the character of our neighborhoods; our close-knit communities, where neighbors look out for each other; our parks and trails, accessible from every community; our access to water; our welcoming stance to new residents; our support for our business community; and our ease of getting around the city without needing a car.

Rather than pointing solely towards large-scale top-down projects, **the work of NFK2050 lies in enhancing our everyday lives and our communities,** and helping them to be the best versions of themselves.

PRESERVE OUR SENSE OF PLACE:

Norfolk is one of the oldest cities in the United States and has a long, rich, and complex history. **Our identities and stories are rooted in our unique neighborhoods, and we should preserve and build on this sense of place.**

Norfolk's diverse housing stock, historic neighborhoods, strong downtown core, light rail infrastructure, and widespread access to nature are singular even within Hampton Roads, and that urban character is what makes us special. While there are ideas from other cities and communities throughout NFK2050 as case studies for what's possible, we will ensure they are adapted to our local landscapes and cultures. We can become even more rooted, celebrating our places and our people.

Norfolk is like no other place. The plan for its future should be similarly unique.

CENTER OUR MOST VULNERABLE:

At every stage, Norfolk residents voiced their concerns for their less fortunate neighbors, and their insistence that, more than anything else, **NFK2050 centers and lifts up our most vulnerable communities.**

Community members want the policy recommendations implemented from NFK2050 to be detailed, targeted, and nuanced in order to make sure they truly benefit all, and not just those already thriving. Stakeholders want to ensure any environmental resilience measures explicitly protect those historically left unprotected. Residents want widespread efforts to center equity, meet neighbors where they are, and shape a more prosperous future for all.

Our city is diverse, and full of grassroots leaders who are actively working to care for their communities. The planning team heard a wealth of empathy from the Norfolk community, and NFK2050 embodies that care in its land use and policy recommendations as well.

NFK2050 Plan Vision

Building on our emerging themes, and with the strong guidance of the diverse voices in Norfolk's neighborhoods and communities, a consolidated Plan Vision encompasses the dreams and aspirations of our city for the next 25 years and beyond.

By 2050, Norfolk will be...

a resilient city

Norfolk lives in harmony with our natural systems, and is able to withstand future change and bounce back strongly.

an equitable city

Our city provides opportunity for every resident, young and old, and celebrates their unique backgrounds and stories.

a family city

Norfolk is a place where families of all types want to come here, stay here, and take root, feeling welcome and finding support for their needs.

a regional city

Norfolk is an urban, cultural, and economic hub within a prosperous, connected, and diverse region.

a growing city

Our land is used efficiently, and we grow from the strong roots planted in our many neighborhoods.

by 2050, Norfolk will be...

a resilient city

Norfolk lives in harmony with our natural systems, and is able to withstand future change and bounce back strongly.



(City of Norfolk)

Norfolk is surrounded on three sides by water. Inlets, creeks, and other waterways are present in almost every corner of the city. With our connections to water and nature, Norfolk can become a *biophilic city,* connecting our innate love for and care of nature to our planning decisions, and providing enormous benefits for our residents and our natural systems together. But our systems can change, and we need to anticipate and plan for that change.

In the next 25 years, changes and disruptions will invariably occur—whether from shifts in climate, technology, the economy, or other large forces from beyond our borders. **When those shifts and changes do occur, our city will be ready:** withstanding shocks and stresses with our protective infrastructure, and bringing our communities even closer together through strong social ties.



(WRT)

Every Norfolk resident, no matter their background, history, or means, deserves the opportunity—and the support—to shape their own future. Our diversity is our strength, and by elevating the stories of all who live here, we celebrate the cultures that define who we are.

Norfolk is a city where long-term residents can live side by side with newly-arrived sailors, students, and other individuals seeking a place to put down roots. Our housing will provide enough diverse options for families of all incomes, sizes, and stages of life. Our business community will support entrepreneurs and innovative approaches to building wealth. In all our future planning, we will lift up our unique stories and provide opportunities for each other.

by 2050, Norfolk will be...

an equitable city

Our city provides opportunity for every resident, young and old, and celebrates their unique backgrounds and stories.

by 2050, Norfolk will be...

a family city

Norfolk is a place where families of all types want to come here, stay here, and take root, feeling welcome and finding support for their needs.



(City of Norfolk)

We are a city that centers and supports families of all shapes, sizes, ages, and configurations, and that commitment will be visible in many ways. Parks and open spaces provide joy, respite, and space for activities for all ages. Streets are safe, green, and walkable, creating strong connections to daily amenities. Schools anchor their neighborhoods and create immersive learning environments. Housing options are abundant and meet needs for all stages of life.

Norfolk's future rests on its ability to attract, retain, and encourage families to come here, stay here, and **put down deep roots into their local community.**



(City of Norfolk)

With a connected and lively downtown, Norfolk is a cultural and economic destination for the entire Hampton Roads region. We lie at the hub of the region's connective infrastructure, host the world's largest naval base, are a leader in the defense, shipping, and maritime industries, and proudly claim the only light rail system in Virginia.

With all of these benefits, Norfolk will embrace its role as a leader in the region, the state, and the eastern seaboard. **Working together with our sister cities, we can build collaborations and share in future abundance** by committing to local investments in our infrastructure and our economy.

by 2050, Norfolk will be...

a regional city

Norfolk is an urban, cultural, and economic hub within a prosperous, connected, and diverse region.

by 2050, Norfolk will be...

a growing city

Our land is used efficiently, and we grow from the strong roots we have in our many neighborhoods.



(WRT)

Norfolk's land is a finite resource, and we must be good stewards of what we have. As we think towards the future and how we might invite more residents to call Norfolk home, we need to remain nimble and responsive in our approach towards land use and development: **preserving the beloved character of our communities, while making room for new neighbors.**

Growing our city's economy and population will take deliberate policy and design decisions. By being intentional about that growth, we can benefit from the virtuous cycle it will spur: increased fiscal health, allowing for additional investments, ultimately leading to widespread and equitably distributed prosperity in our neighborhoods and our individual households. Norfolk's future is bright and growing, and we can plan to get there together.

(City of Norfolk)

Plan Pillars

Rooted in the Plan Vision and our community voices, NFK2050's Goals and Actions are organized under four primary Pillars. These Plan Pillars are aspirational, and outline the heart of the collective vision for Norfolk's future development.

Early in the planning process, the NFK2050 team made the decision to streamline the contents of the Comprehensive Plan for accessibility, clearly communicating the plan's vision for the future of our city. Instead of listing the planning recommendations under the City departments that will implement them, or as discrete physical planning topics, the team instead identified four active phrases that act as foundational Pillars, grouping related plan topics while outlining broader aspirations for where and how positive change might happen across the next 25 years.

In essence, **the Plan Pillars translate the Plan Vision statements into the language of comprehensive and physical planning,** setting the stage for how we might accomplish the shared vision and outlining the city we aspire to grow into by 2050.

Opposite are the final 4 Plan Pillars and their primary Plan Topics:

- **Celebrating Our Community:** This Pillar takes root in Norfolk's neighborhoods, art, culture, history, sense of place, and city facilities and services, building on all that makes our city special as our greatest asset.
- **Growing Equitably:** This Pillar addresses Norfolk residents' most urgent needs by tackling goals and strategies to diversify and strengthen Norfolk's housing and economic development.
- **Embracing Nature:** Rooted in the natural environment, this Pillar builds on our parks, waterfronts, habitat, sustainability, and leadership in resilience work so Norfolk can live in harmony with our surroundings.
- **Connecting the City:** Bridges, tunnels, rail, highway, and multimodal transit infrastructure, as well as the utilities and critical infrastructure under our feet — this Pillar includes all our transportation and utility systems.

All of the NFK2050 Plan Goals, Actions, and Strategies are organized under these Plan Pillars, which you can read in Chapter 4.



CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

Norfolk is blessed with many distinct and proud neighborhoods. Long-time residents and newcomers alike embrace the quality of life that comes with waterfront access, investment in the arts, and diverse walkable neighborhoods. How can we expand what's already great about our city for all residents and stakeholders?

PLAN TOPICS: *Historic Preservation; Public Art & Culture; Placemaking; City Facilities & Services*



EMBRACING NATURE

Nature is all around us – even in an urban environment. Norfolk is full of amazing parks, waterfronts, and even habitats for wildlife. The city's increasing flood events and sea level rise may challenge this balance, though. How can we embrace nature while developing our urban places and reducing the threat of future flooding?

PLAN TOPICS: *Resilience; Parks and Open Space; Sustainability*



GROWING EQUITABLY

Norfolk has diverse housing types and jobs in many strong industries. Historically, though, the growth and prosperity of Norfolk hasn't benefited every community equally. As we grow into 2050 and beyond, how can we make sure all our neighbors are lifted up towards a brighter future?

PLAN TOPICS: *Housing; Economic Development*



CONNECTING THE CITY

New assets developed in the city only truly benefit everyone if they are freely accessible and well-connected. Despite increasing transit and bike options, Norfolk residents tend to still rely on cars, furthering congestion. How can we better connect our strong neighborhoods to each other and to the entire Hampton Roads region?

PLAN TOPICS: *Mobility & Transportation; Utilities; Critical Infrastructure*

03 Where We'll Grow

FUTURE LAND USE

As a comprehensive plan, NFK2050 is, at its heart, most concerned with **land use:** what kinds of activities someone can conduct on a given parcel of land in the city.

NFK2050's Future Land Use Plan is comprised of 11 distinct types of uniquely Norfolk Places, charting a broad course towards the future while still accommodating uncertainty by remaining flexible. The Future Land Use Plan underpins the policy recommendations in the rest of the plan by rooting those transformational ideas in the unique spaces of our city.

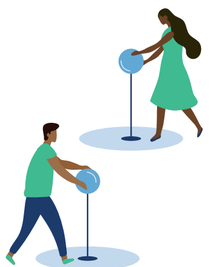


Phase 2 Open House event (WRT)

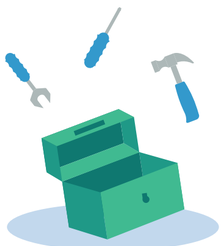
Future Land Use:

What is a Future Land Use Map?

A Future Land Use Map (FLUM) is a map of the community's **intentions**. It is distinct from a zoning map, which is a map of what is and is not permissible in a given area; rather, the Future Land Use Map illustrates a **consolidated community vision for where and how Norfolk will grow**.



If we think of the Plan's Goals and Actions (Chapter 4) as ***what*** Norfolk needs to do in order to become the city envisioned by the community, then the Future Land Use Map shows **where these policies and big ideas need to be applied** in the city in order to achieve this.



Ultimately, the Future Land Use Map is **a tool to help make decisions** about what kind of development is appropriate and where we should encourage it. **It's our North Star to build towards the city we collectively want to become by 2050.**

I thought Norfolk was built out. Why are we talking about growth and development?

Throughout the NFK2050 process, many residents and stakeholders have mentioned that the city is "built out," meaning there are few vacant, or unbuilt areas left within the city.

This is only true if we don't consider **redeveloping the land that we do have to include a wider variety of uses and more density**. The FLUM shows where the community can and should think about more intensely adding growth in order to meet our vision for a holistic, resilient, and prosperous future.

How might I use the Future Land Use Map?

The Future Land Use Map is a consolidated vision for Norfolk's intended growth and physical character. As such, it can inspire property owners, developers, and neighbors to see opportunities for their community and how an individual project or idea might help build that vision.

An owner or developer with an idea for how to improve their property should first consult the Future Land Use Plan to understand the vision for land use, character, form, and other important considerations. From there, with a sense of the type of development the city is encouraging, the owner or developer can then consult a combination of the adopted pattern books and design principles, which contain more detailed form and character guidance depending on where the project is in the city, and the Zoning Ordinance, which contains specific regulations around where, how, and what is permissible to build on a given site.

The FLUM will also be an important document for city staff as they review projects to ensure that proposed developments align with NFK2050's policies. Refer to Chapter 5 for more information about evaluating projects according to Future Land Use Plan.

Developing the Future Land Use Map:

What was the process to develop the Future Land Use Map?

City Planning staff, in coordination with the consultant team, began work on the FLUM after Phase 2 Engagement ended and as the Plan Goals and Actions were being drafted. It was important to first hear broadly from the Norfolk community and understand what development, regulatory, and policy ideas would need to be incorporated in the plan so we could begin identifying possible spaces in the city.

The team felt that a Future Land Use Map should look **distinctly different from a Zoning map**, and contain the fewest number of categories possible to simplify the overall vision and allow some flexibility within the categories. The FLUM categories ("Place Types") and the map itself went through multiple rounds of refinement to find the right balance in the amount and type of information depicted.

What are "Place Types"?

"Place Types" are a way of thinking about a city's character in ways that are understandable for everyday citizens. They combine:

- **land use** (what activity someone can conduct on a given parcel of land);
- **community character** (types of buildings, amenities, gathering places); and
- **urban design and form** (how densely to build, how close together buildings should be).

In the following pages, you'll find more detailed explanations on each of the 11 Place Types envisioned for Norfolk by 2050. Distinct Place Types designated on the FLUM are areas of the city where the land use policies and guidance within NFK2050 will be targeted.

What are Primary vs. Secondary uses?

Primary Uses are land uses that are generally appropriate for the Place Type identified on the Future Land Use Map. These land uses either already exist in those areas, or are appropriate in those areas in the long term vision of the City.

Primary uses within each Place Type are typically compatible with one another either due to similar operations or the support the uses provide each other. These land uses are either permitted as a matter of right or through an entitlement process which regulates the operations or the development form.

Secondary Uses are uses that might be appropriate for the Place Type identified on the future land use map, under the right circumstances. They are uses that either are allowed through an entitlement process or require alterations to the land use regulations or zoning map to be permitted.

Secondary uses should be evaluated within the context of the specific Place Type and the characteristics of the specific parcel, using the following: alignment with the long range vision of the area in which they would support; neighborhood character and development patterns; building form and architecture; and operational impacts.

Throughout the Future Land Use chapter, these two types of uses are cross-referenced with the NFK2050 Place Types to give broad guidance on what is envisioned for each area.

What does "Sustain" mean in the NFK2050 Place Types?

Sustain Place Types contrast with areas of higher projected densities or concentration of uses in that **prospective developers and property owners can look to their surrounding contexts, Character District, and pattern/plan books for guidance on what kind of growth is expected in these areas.** These Sustain areas, which comprise 73% of the city's land area, contain much of the city's existing single-family residential fabric but also include a variety of other residential types and densities.

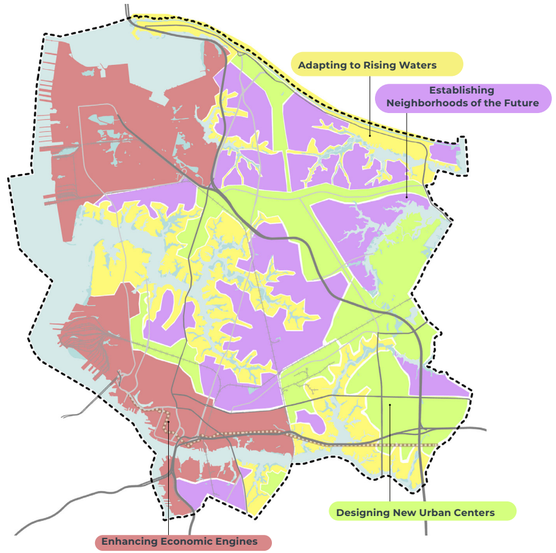
The Secondary, non-residential uses envisioned for the Sustain areas are appropriate primarily along arterials and collector streets, preserving the residential character of the neighborhood interiors. Non-residential uses in the Sustain Place Types are characterized by small-scale, neighborhood-serving development at a scale and form that is consistent with the applicable Character District.

How does this incorporate Vision 2100 and other plans?

Vision 2100 was a guiding document in shaping NFK2050 and the overall Future Land Use Map. The yellow areas in the Vision 2100 map, *"Adapting to Rising Waters,"* are generally understood to be areas the city will need to protect, but higher-density growth is not encouraged. These geographies fall largely within the Place Types we are calling "Sustain," meaning development can continue as usual here. As always, a property owner should consider neighboring context, architectural character, and potential longer-range risks like sea level rise, when making decisions about how to improve their properties.

The rest of the city, particularly the Vision 2100 zones depicted in green, *"Designing New Urban Centers,"* are areas where NFK2050's Place Type designations envision higher-density and amenity-rich communities. These land use categories encourage growth in transit-connected, higher ground areas with strong potential for redevelopment.

Other plans that had a strong influence in determining the boundaries and extent of the new Place Type designations are the Green Infrastructure Plan, the Character District boundaries, the Multimodal Transit Study, and Future Land Use recommendations within previously adopted neighborhood-scale community plans.



Though none of these plans are literally transcribed onto the FLUM, the planning team carefully considered the consolidated overlays of their mapping work as we determined our Place Types and extents.

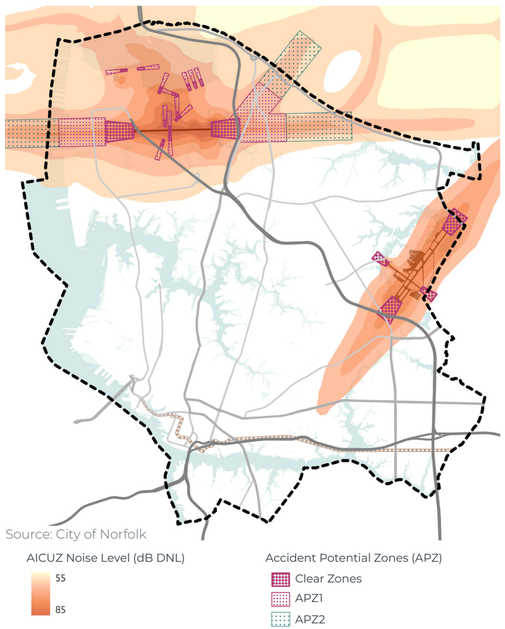
How was the Future Land Use Map developed?

How does this coordinate with Military and Air Regulations?

Federal regulations will always supersede local laws, and that applies to the Future Land Use Map as well. With major military installations in Norfolk and Virginia Beach, and the Norfolk International Airport serving Hampton Roads, the restrictions in the existing zoning ordinance around heights, uses, and other types of development continue to hold sway in the areas of the city that fall within the Airport Safety Overlay (ASO) and the Air Installation Compatibility Use Zone (AICUZ).

The aim of these restrictions is to ensure safety and to protect neighboring communities from adverse impacts and noise in the vicinity of Norfolk International Airport and Chambers Field at Naval Station Norfolk. As such, NFK2050 cannot support any proposed increase in intensity of land uses located in these incompatible noise and accident potential zones, and the Future Land Use Plan will seek to reduce the intensity of these incompatible uses in these areas.

Additionally, the Hampton Roads Joint Land Use Study (2005) and Norfolk and Virginia Beach Joint Land Use Study (2019) are guiding documents that address how military operations and city neighborhoods can not only coexist but thrive. Norfolk will continue to coordinate land use planning with all our institutions, including the military, colleges and universities, and medical institutions, to make sure the city is growing in a way that's compatible and complementary to surrounding neighborhoods.



Source: City of Norfolk

What are the Character Districts, and how were they incorporated?

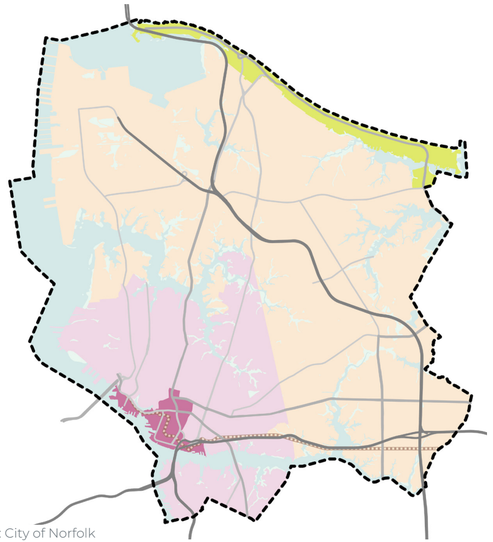
Character Districts are currently used to designate **appropriate neighborhood context and character for development,** particularly for infill. The Character Districts establish development standards based on existing character in 4 distinct areas of the city, generally tied to historic development patterns:

Downtown: Areas developed earliest in the city's recorded history, comprising a broad range of higher intensity land uses, limited on-site parking, common open and green spaces, and widespread pedestrian and transit accessibility.

Traditional: Areas primarily developed in the early 20th century, with a grid pattern of streets, smaller lots, and a variety of community-facing uses in close proximity to each other.

Suburban: Areas developed after World War II with more curvilinear streets, larger blocks and lot sizes, and a greater separation of uses.

Coastal: Areas along the Chesapeake Bay developed in a linear fashion centered on Ocean View Ave, broken up by a repeating pattern of north/south streets leading to beach accesses. These areas developed with an eclectic mix of housing types interspersed with neighborhood-scale commercial uses.



Source: City of Norfolk

For NFK2050's Future Land Use Plan, the existing Downtown Character District is captured by the Regional Activity Center Place Type. The Traditional, Suburban, and Coastal Character Districts are used as "underlay" areas in the Place Types titled "Sustain." An interested resident or developer should consult the zoning overlay with form guidance for their given Character District to understand how best to meet these expectations for development standards.

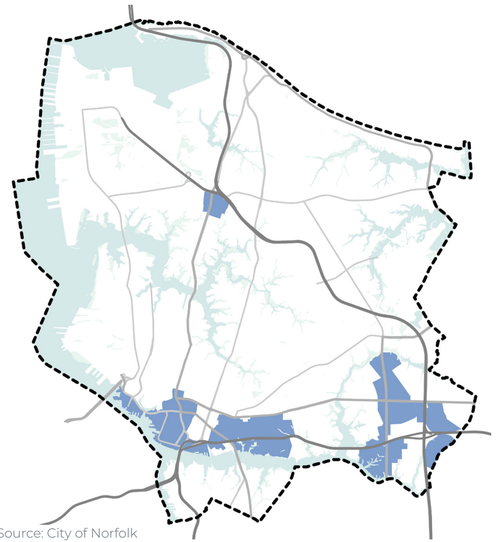
How was the Future Land Use Map developed?

How does this incorporate Urban Development Areas (UDAs)?

The Code of Virginia allows localities to identify boundaries of **Urban Development Areas (UDAs)** as part of their Comprehensive Plan, defined as **areas that are appropriate for higher density development due to proximity to transportation facilities** or other infrastructure, and **suitable for redevelopment or infill development**. Designated UDAs must be developed in accordance with principles of traditional neighborhood design (e.g., pedestrian-friendly road design, mixed-use neighborhoods, reduction of setbacks, connectivity of roads and pedestrian networks, etc).

Norfolk's UDAs were defined in conjunction with existing and planned transit, and therefore their boundaries share close ties with the Transit Supportive Areas (TSAs), which are described in more detail on p.100. As part of the adoption of plaNorfolk2030, selected areas around existing light rail stations were designated as Transit Supportive Areas (TSAs), reflecting strong enough transit access to encourage higher density development and a shift away from car reliance. The TSAs are also considered UDAs, and are included in VTrans, Virginia's statewide transportation plan.

In addition to the TSAs, plaNorfolk2030 also designated the Military Circle and Wards Corner areas as UDAs due to active planning efforts to expand high-capacity mass transit to these parts of the city. In all, **the UDA designation helps to coordinate future land use and transportation planning for the city's targeted growth areas,** and supports the resilience goals of Vision 2100, as these areas are along the spine of high ground in the city. The development and infrastructure standards of UDAs, as defined by the Code of Virginia, will be applied to these areas, which are depicted on this map.



Source: City of Norfolk

What are the "Planning Focus Areas"?

If we think of the Future Land Use map as a map of where NFK2050 policies encourage certain kinds of development, the Planning Focus Areas are places where those intentions are **most urgent.** Three distinct areas of Norfolk will receive dedicated near-term planning attention to work with their local communities and stakeholders, creating individual visions for the future of these areas:

- Greater St. Paul's
- Military Circle Area
- Southside

For more detail on these three designated Planning Focus Areas, see p. 98.

What happens when two Place Types are adjacent?

In some locations on the Future Land Use Map, Place Types of a greater scale (e.g. Corridor Mixed Use) are directly adjacent to a Place Type of a lower scale (e.g. Sustain – Suburban). The land along Military Highway is a good example of these different uses and characters in close proximity.

In these instances, **we can think of the Place Types as a spectrum for what type of development might be appropriate there,** provided it is compatible with the surrounding form and character. To ease the transition between Place Types, development should complement the scale and context of the adjacent areas.



(City of Norfolk)

Future Land Use

Place Types	Open Space	Conservation	Single-Unit Residential	ADUs	Multi-family, small-scale (2-6 units)	Multi-family, large-scale (7+ units)	Mixed Use	Commercial/ retail, small-scale office	Office, large-scale	Research and Development	Institutional	Entertainment	Utility/ Transportation	Light Industrial	Heavy Industrial
Transportation & Logistics	○					○	○	○	●	○	○	○	●	●	●
Innovation & Production	○		●		○	○	○	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●
Regional Activity Center	○		●		●	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	○	○	
Corridor Mixed Use	○		●		○	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	○	○	●
Community Mixed Use	●		○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○		○	
Sustain - Coastal	●	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○		○	○			
Sustain - Suburban	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○		○	○			
Sustain - Traditional	○	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○		○	○			
Open Space	●	○						○			○	○			
Conservation	○	●													

● PRIMARY USE ○ SECONDARY USE

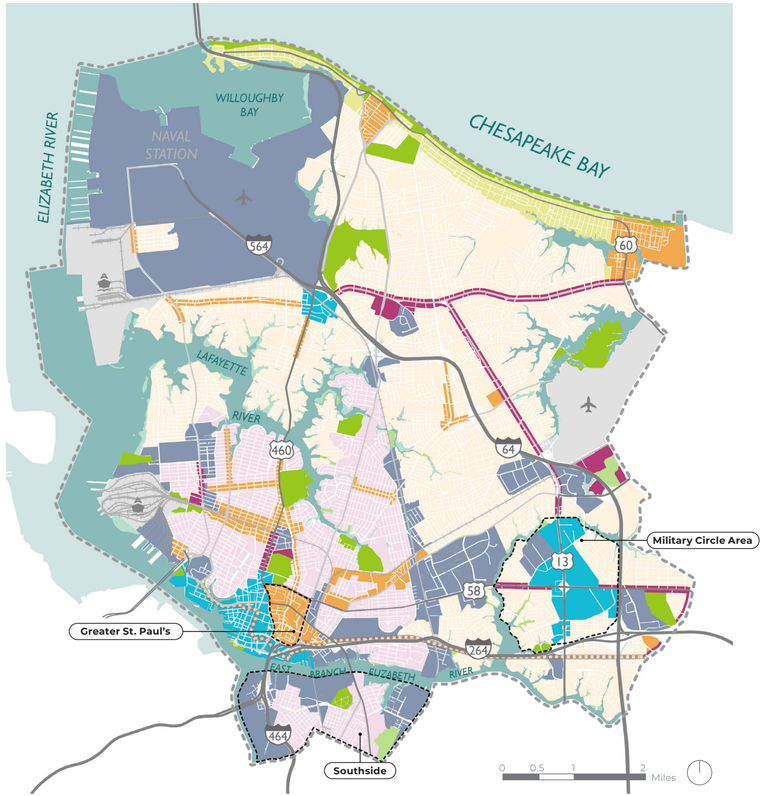


Figure 1: Future Land Use Map

NFK2050's Future Land Use Map shows Place Types distributed throughout the city. Areas are designated "Sustain" where context and character should continue to guide development decisions. Notably, most of the designated Place Types that fall outside the "sustain" categories — those where the city is encouraging more active growth and redevelopment — are limited to areas of lower environmental risk. The "Developing the Future Land Use Map" section outlines this in more detail.

The ensuing spreads include more explanation of each of these Place Types in character, use, and mobility connections.

Transportation and Logistics

TRANSPORTATION AND LOGISTICS PLACE TYPES ARE PRIMARILY OUR PORTS, AIRPORTS, AND LARGE INDUSTRIAL TERMINALS, AS WELL AS OPERATIONS AND TRAINING.

These industries contribute to Norfolk's regional and national commerce and employment. The more intense uses that support large-scale freight movement require buffers when located next to less intense uses. This Place Type might also include warehousing, distribution, and commercial areas as supplementary to the primary uses.

BY 2050 THESE PLACES WILL...

- Ensure efficient freight movement through strategic investment and plans.
- Enhance freight connectivity and routes to strengthen regional networks and economic development.
- Support employment opportunities and workforce development.

● PRIMARY LAND USES

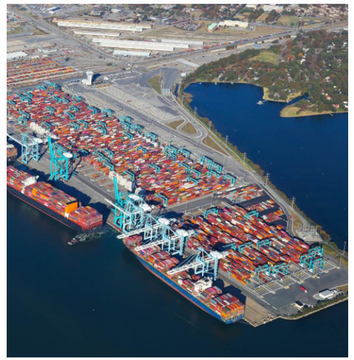
○ SECONDARY LAND USES

Land Uses left blank are not supported

- ○ Open Space
  - *Conservation*
  - *Single-Unit Residential*
  - *ADUs*
  - *Multi-family, small scale*
- ○ Multi-family, large-scale
- ○ Mixed Use
- ○ Commercial/ retail, small-scale office
- ● Office, large-scale
- ○ Research & Development
- ○ Institutional
- ○ Entertainment
- ● Utility/ Transportation
- ● Light Industrial
- ● Heavy Industrial

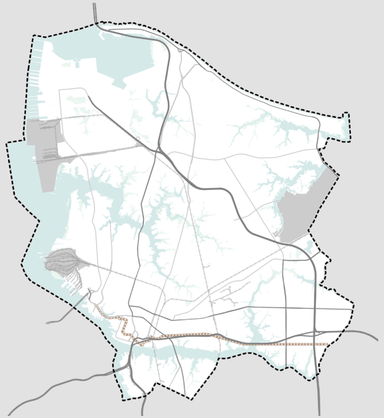


(Norfolk International Airport)

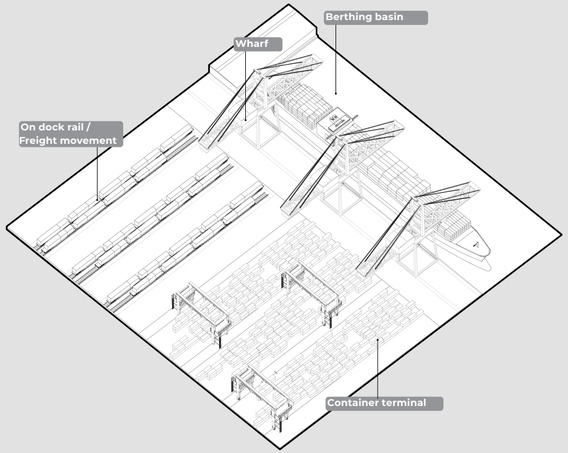


(Port of Virginia)

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?



CHARACTER

Transportation and Logistics Place Types are characterized by large-scale infrastructure and industrial operations. Warehousing, mobility terminals, and freight facilities are closely associated with these uses. The built environment prioritizes efficiency and functionality. Since the primary uses relate to services, utilities, and industry, buffer zones and landscaping are needed to reduce noise and heavy truck traffic that may impact adjacent land uses. Where needed, office spaces and supportive logistics operations can be integrated.

MOBILITY

Mobility within this Place Type is designed around heavy goods movement and freight efficiency, with minimal provisions for pedestrian access. Road networks accommodate high-capacity freight and ensure connections to major transportation roads designated for that traffic. In large areas within this Place Type, internal mobility systems might help move people from site to site (shuttle services, other specialized transit).

Innovation and Production

INNOVATION AND PRODUCTION PLACE TYPES ENCOURAGE A RANGE OF USES, INCLUDING MANUFACTURING, CAMPUS, AND OTHER REGIONAL HUBS FOR INNOVATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH.

Rather than separating Norfolk's higher education campuses, healthcare facilities, technological production areas, and industrial spaces, NFK2050 groups them into a single category, speaking to the emerging blurring boundaries between uses like "clean manufacturing," biotech campuses, and innovation districts. Complementary uses like retail, office, and commercial activity will allow workers and students to access amenities in their daily environments.

BY 2050 THESE PLACES WILL...

- Accommodate Norfolk's major economic engines with larger parcels and strong infrastructure connectivity.
- Maintain space for manufacturing, production, warehousing, and other ancillary light industrial uses.
- Encourage workers and students to access supporting amenities (food, retail, open space) without needing to drive elsewhere.
- Support employment opportunities and workforce development.

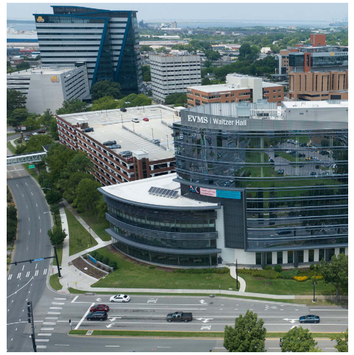
● PRIMARY LAND USES
○ SECONDARY LAND USES

Land Uses left blank are not supported

- ○ Open Space
  - *Conservation*
  - *Single-Unit Residential*
  - *ADUs*
- ○ Multi-family, small-scale
- ○ Multi-family, large-scale
- ○ Mixed Use
- ○ Commercial/ retail, small-scale office
- ● Office, large-scale
- ● Research & Development
- ● Institutional
- ○ Entertainment
- ● Utility/ Transportation
- ● Light Industrial
- ● Heavy Industrial

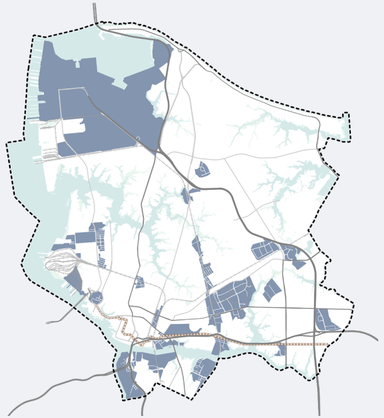


(City of Norfolk)

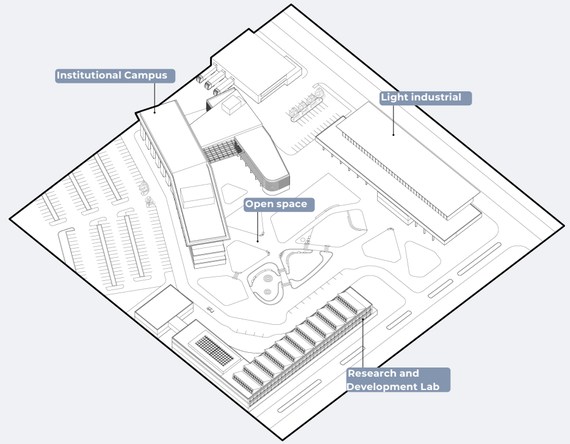


(Eastern Virginia Medical School)

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?



CHARACTER

Innovation and Production Place Types are focused on economic activity, research, education, and production. Building forms are larger and specialized to accommodate internal activities like manufacturing or healthcare, and sometimes interconnected into a larger campus. Heavier industrial uses should include external buffering to mitigate adverse effects to neighboring communities. Residential uses may be included in mixed-use or live/work configurations, but ground floors should be accessible and active from the street.

MOBILITY

Major employment hubs like Norfolk's universities and hospitals should be well connected to transit and bicycle infrastructure, but many activities in Innovation and Production areas will continue to rely on automotive accessibility. In some cases, freight and truck infrastructure connections should be accommodated. In the case of larger campuses, clear and safe pedestrian connections are prioritized, with only limited and peripheral vehicular access. Parking areas should be to the rear of the facilities and integrate environmental and stormwater infrastructure to mitigate runoff and the impacts of urban heat.

Regional Activity Center

REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTERS INTEGRATE RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND CULTURAL USES, CREATING A LIVELY AND DYNAMIC URBAN ENVIRONMENT.

Regional Activity Centers serve as major economic and social hubs for the Hampton Roads region, accommodating local residents and attracting visitors. Regional Activity Centers support high density development and dynamic public gathering spaces.

BY 2050 THESE PLACES WILL...

- Encourage mixed-use developments to create vibrant environments.
- Reduce car dependency in favor of transit and bicycle accessibility.
- Promote economic and entertainment activities that attract regional visitors.
- Support gradual transformation while maintaining a recognizable and strong urban identity.

● PRIMARY LAND USES
○ SECONDARY LAND USES

Land Uses left blank are not supported

- ○ Open Space
  - *Conservation*
  - *Single-Unit Residential*
  - *ADUs*
  - *Multi-family, small-scale*
- ○ Multi-family, large-scale
- ● Mixed Use
- ● Commercial/ retail, small-scale office
- ● Office, large-scale
- ○ Research & Development
- ● Institutional
- ● Entertainment
- ○ Utility/ Transportation
- ○ Light Industrial
  - *Heavy Industrial*

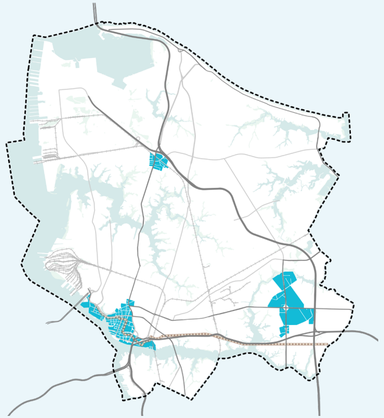


(City of Norfolk)

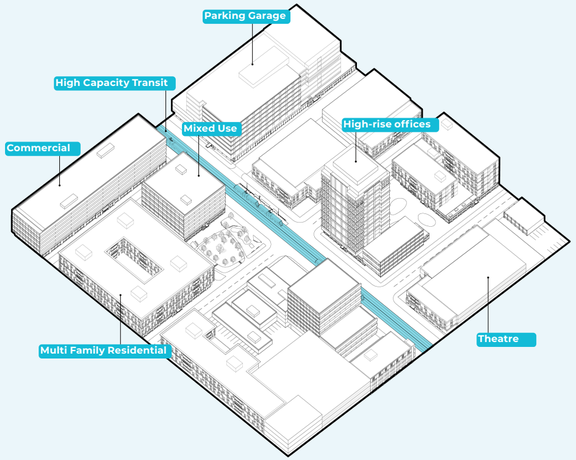


(City of Norfolk)

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?



CHARACTER

Regional Activity Centers are vibrant urban environments with a strong identity focusing on dynamic lifestyles throughout the day and night. High and medium density development mixes residential uses with office, retail, and entertainment, all of which coexist in an integrated manner. Public plazas, pedestrian promenades, and regional cultural destinations contribute to the sense of Place, as these areas serve as destinations for both local residents and regional visitors. Development patterns remain adaptable, allowing for gradual transformation of these Places over time as market and community needs evolve.

MOBILITY

Transit accessibility is the key focus of Regional Activity Centers, with major high capacity transit as the primary connector for residents, workers, and visitors. Mobility prioritizes accessibility and regional access to jobs and entertainment. Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure are seamlessly integrated into the urban fabric, and pedestrian movement is prioritized. Parking options and alternatives should reduce the impact of cars in the urban environment to reinforce the pedestrian-oriented design of this Place Type.

Corridor Mixed Use

CORRIDOR MIXED USE PLACE TYPES BORDER MAJOR NORFOLK TRANSIT AND MOBILITY CORRIDORS, BLENDING RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES.

This Place Type supports Transit Oriented Development (TOD) by concentrating density near transit nodes while allowing for a gradual transition in other areas. Corridor Districts are vibrant and economically active corridors that balance new growth with existing businesses and residents, and aim for enhanced pedestrian and bicycle mobility.

BY 2050 THESE PLACES WILL...

- Promote transit-oriented development near key transit and commercial nodes where Norfolk residents live.
- Preserve local businesses while encouraging economic development.
- Enhance streetscapes for safer and more accessible mobility to housing, employment areas, and commercial areas.
- Support gradual transitions between high density and gentle density areas.

● PRIMARY LAND USES
○ SECONDARY LAND USES

Land Uses left blank are not supported

- ○ Open Space
  - *Conservation*
  - *Single-Unit Residential*
  - *ADUs*
- ○ Multi-family, small-scale
- ● Multi-family, large-scale
- ● Mixed Use
- ● Commercial/ retail, small-scale office
- ● Office, large-scale
- ○ Research & Development
- ○ Institutional
- ● Entertainment
- ○ Utility/ Transportation
- ○ Light Industrial
  - *Heavy Industrial*

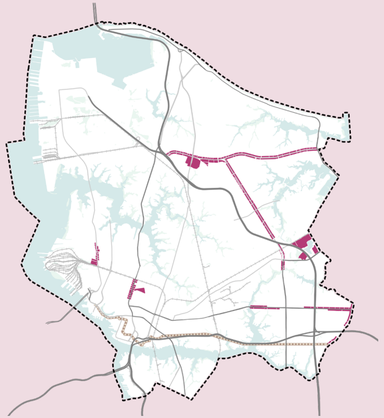


(City of Norfolk)

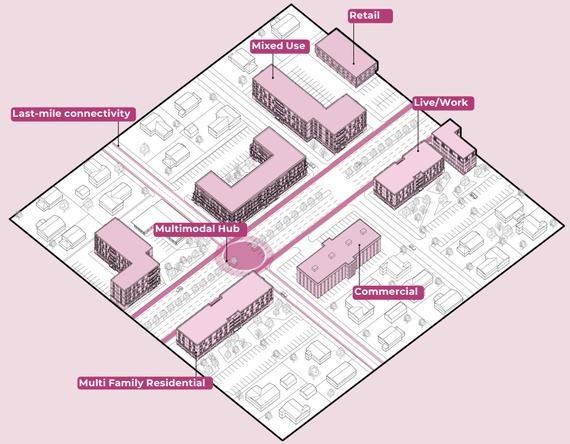


(City of Norfolk)

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?



CHARACTER

Corridor Mixed Use Place Types are characterized by a dynamic mix of uses that evolve with mobility infrastructure and urban growth. Medium to higher density development is concentrated around transit nodes, creating compact and walkable urban environments that support businesses and housing. Corridor Mixed Use Place Types encourage an active street presence, with urban street frontages and ground floor storefronts or other commercial uses. Pedestrian-friendly streetscapes near transit infrastructure support access to businesses and transit.

MOBILITY

Mobility in Corridor Mixed Use Place Types is focused on multimodal access, with a strong focus on walkability and bikeability near higher density nodes. These corridors should connect residents to services, commercial areas, and employment opportunities. Streetscape improvements prioritize pedestrian safety with sidewalks, improved crossings, and active ground floor uses. Bicycle lanes and high-capacity transit is encouraged to create a seamless mobility network. Traffic management strategies balance the needs of vehicles with pedestrian- and transit-oriented environments to ensure safety.

Community Mixed Use

COMMUNITY MIXED USE PLACE TYPES BLEND RESIDENTIAL, RETAIL, AND SERVICES TO CREATE VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOOD HUBS.

These areas serve as key points for social and economic interactions and provide residents with access to daily needs. This Place Type is mainly centered in enhancing walkability and connectivity, so Norfolk residents can easily and safely access local amenities and services.

BY 2050 THESE PLACES WILL...

- Promote gradual transformation while maintaining the urban character and identity of the Place.
- Support middle and gentle density that integrates with retail and community services.
- Encourage neighborhood-serving businesses.
- Strengthen pedestrian and bike infrastructure to reduce short vehicular trips.
- Ensure smooth transitions to surrounding residential neighborhoods and/or commercial corridors.

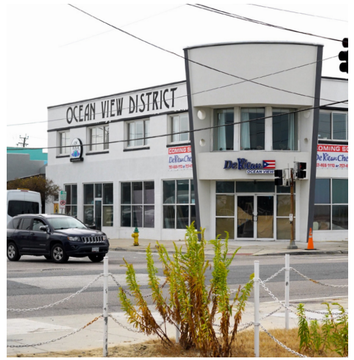
● PRIMARY LAND USE
○ SECONDARY LAND USE

Land Uses left blank are not supported

- ● Open Space
  Conservation
- ○ Single-Unit Residential
- ○ ADUs
- ● Multi-family, small-scale
- ● Multi-family, large-scale
- ● Mixed Use
- ● Commercial/ retail, small-scale office
- ○ Office, large-scale
- ○ Research & Development
- ○ Institutional
- ○ Entertainment
  Utility/ Transportation
- ○ Light Industrial
  Heavy Industrial

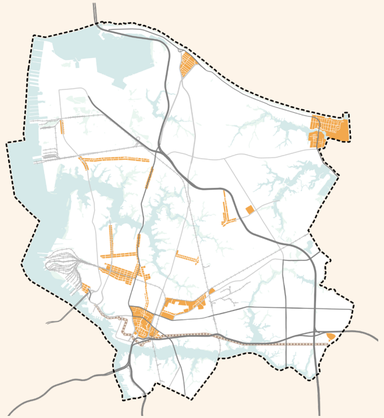


(City of Norfolk)

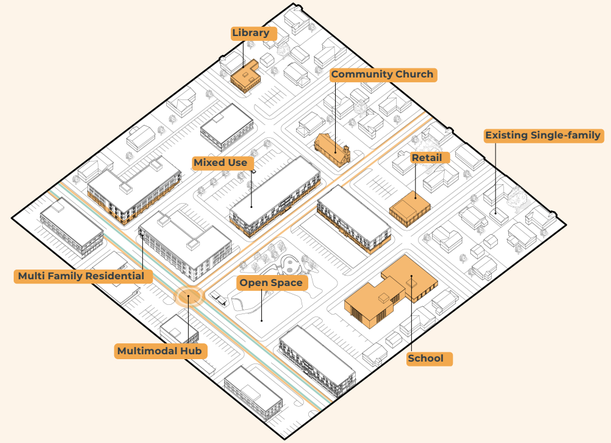


(WRT)

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?



CHARACTER

Community Mixed Use Place Types foster a human-scaled environment where Norfolk residents can easily access daily activities on foot or bicycle from their adjacent residential neighborhood. Buildings vary in size and function, but they are designed to blend with the surrounding neighborhood and have active facades and ground-floor uses. Density in this Place Type is gentle to moderate, balancing residential, retail, and community service uses. Development and urban transformation supports neighborhood cohesion and gradual transitions to commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods.

MOBILITY

Community Mixed Use Place Types prioritize multimodal transportation and aim to be transit connectors between major Norfolk anchors for employment, economic development, and residential neighborhoods. The streetscapes in this Place Type are highly walkable and bikeable, creating a safe and welcoming public realm. Community Mixed Use Places support transit options, and strategies for connecting residents from their homes to the larger transit network are encouraged. Parking is accommodated but development should minimize the impact of cars.

Sustain - Coastal

SUSTAIN - COASTAL PLACE TYPES ARE DEFINED BY THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF LIVING BY THE WATER AND ITS NATURAL LANDSCAPES.

These Place Types blend residential uses with environmental preservation, and accommodate gentle density. They balance walkability with transit access to amenities and natural waterfront landscapes, and are seamlessly integrated into the urban context.

BY 2050 THESE PLACES WILL...

- Maintain the character and identity of our coastal neighborhoods.
- Focus on amenities and natural landscape strategies that enhance quality of life and access to water for all Norfolk residents.
- Encourage gentle density in higher ground areas, particularly "missing middle" housing types (ADUs, cottage courts, etc.)
- Increase green infrastructure, energy efficiency, and sustainability strategies.

● PRIMARY LAND USES
○ SECONDARY LAND USES

Land Uses left blank are not supported

- ● Open Space
- ○ Conservation
- ● Single-Unit Residential
- ● ADUs
- ● Multi-family, small-scale
- ○ Multi-family, large-scale
- ○ Mixed Use
- ○ Commercial/ retail, small-scale office
- ○ Office, large-scale
- *Research & Development*
- ○ Institutional
- ○ Entertainment
- *Utility/ Transportation*
- *Light Industrial*
- *Heavy Industrial*

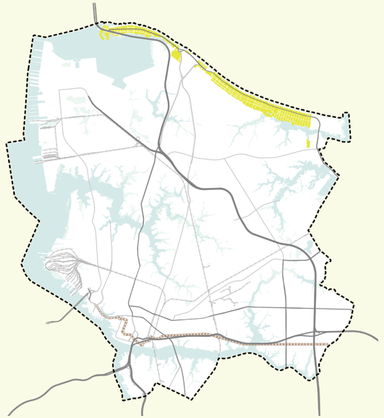


(City of Norfolk)

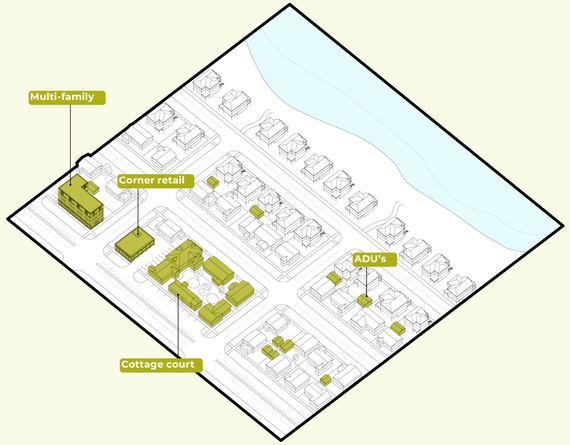


(City of Norfolk)

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?



CHARACTER

Sustain - Coastal Place Types are defined by their proximity to waterfronts and natural landscapes of the neighborhoods nearby. This Place Type allows for gentle density and naturally occurring businesses, services, and amenities, while preserving the character and ecological nature of the waterfronts. There is a focus on living with nature, making these natural landscapes accessible to all Norfolk residents through increased transit and bicycle infrastructure.

MOBILITY

Mobility in Sustain - Coastal Place Types is balanced in residential neighborhoods, accommodating vehicles but also prioritizing bicycle and transit infrastructure so all Norfolk residents can access natural areas and waterfronts. This Place Type encourages human-scaled and community-oriented streetscapes for safe connections in residential areas. Coastal areas provide waterfront paths, trails, and other pedestrian-only infrastructure for connecting residents with the waterfront and other amenities.

Sustain - Suburban

SUSTAIN - SUBURBAN PLACE TYPES BALANCE LOWER DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AND INCREMENTAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT.

This Place Type is primarily characterized by single family homes, but supports a diverse mix of gentle density where appropriate. Sustain - Suburban Place Types allow for a mix of pedestrian-friendly environments and vehicular access so Norfolk residents can be connected to amenities, services, and employment centers.

BY 2050 THESE PLACES WILL...

- Encourage “missing middle” housing in high ground areas.
- Maintain the architectural and cultural character and identity of the neighborhoods.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle networks for increased accessibility to other parts of Norfolk.
- Increased permeability, energy efficiency, and sustainability strategies.

● PRIMARY LAND USES

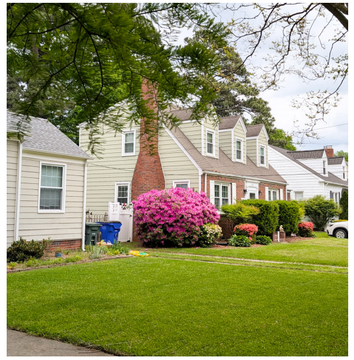
○ SECONDARY LAND USES

Land Uses left blank are not supported

- ○ Open Space
- ○ Conservation
- ● Single-Unit Residential
- ● ADUs
- ○ Multi-family, small-scale
- ○ Multi-family, large-scale
- ○ Mixed Use
- ○ Commercial/ retail, small-scale office
- ○ Office, large-scale
  - *Research & Development*
- ○ Institutional
- ○ Entertainment
  - *Utility/ Transportation*
  - *Light Industrial*
  - *Heavy Industrial*

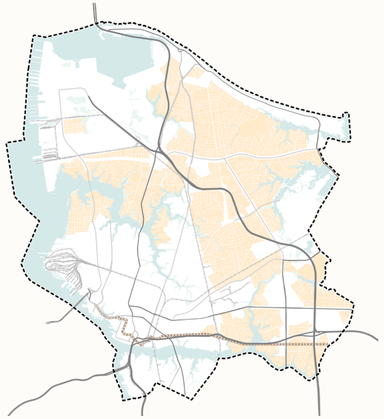


(City of Norfolk)

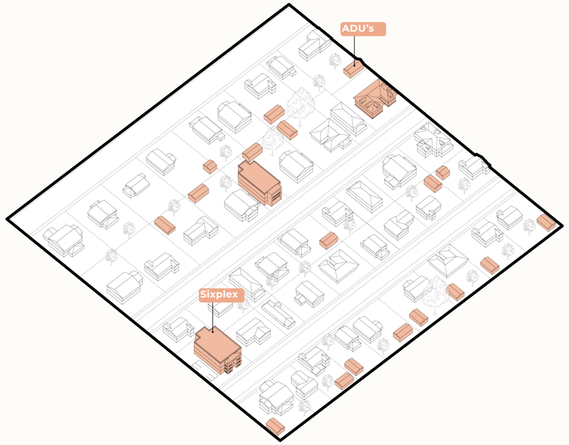


(City of Norfolk)

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?



CHARACTER

Sustain - Suburban Place Types reflect typical post-war suburban patterns of development and add gentle density where appropriate, such as on higher ground or along key roadways. These Places mix single family homes with compatible neighborhood-scale densities so the family-friendly neighborhood environment and feel is preserved. Homes tend to be set back from the street with large yard spaces and wider parcels, with enough space to accommodate infill or accessory dwelling units.

MOBILITY

Pedestrian and bicycle mobility is balanced with vehicular accessibility in the Sustain - Suburban Place Type to ensure resident accessibility to amenities, services, and employment opportunities. Streetscape improvements focus on enhanced local pedestrian infrastructure and bicycle-friendly connections to everyday services.

Sustain - Traditional

FORM AND CHARACTER IN SUSTAIN - TRADITIONAL PLACE TYPES REFLECT THE CITY'S HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND COMPACT RESIDENTIAL FABRIC.

These areas are predominantly single family, with a mix of missing middle housing and small commercial amenities that have integrated over time. Walkability, connected and active streetscapes, and community gathering spaces are some of the elements that make the residents in these areas have a strong sense of identity and social cohesion.

BY 2050 THESE PLACES WILL...

- Maintain the historical, cultural, and architectural fabric of these neighborhoods to continue supporting their strong identity.
- Preserve local businesses and support new, naturally occurring local businesses that serve the community.
- Increase stormwater management, energy efficiency, and sustainability strategies.

PRIMARY LAND USES

SECONDARY LAND USES

Land Uses left blank are not supported

- Open Space
- Conservation
- Single-Unit Residential
- ADUs
- Multi-family, small-scale
- Multi-family, large-scale
- Mixed Use
- Commercial/ retail, small-scale office
- Office, large-scale
- *Research & Development*
- Institutional
- Entertainment
- *Utility/ Transportation*
- *Light Industrial*
- *Heavy Industrial*

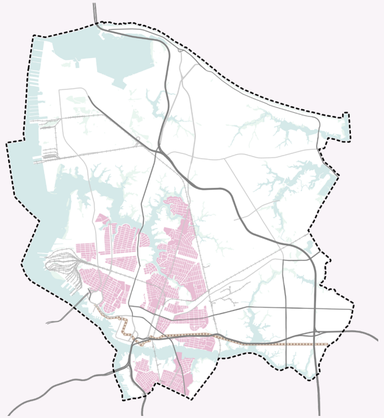


(City of Norfolk)

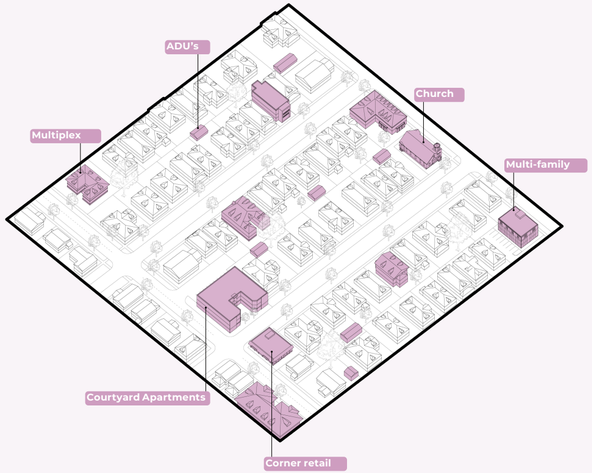


(City of Norfolk)

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?



CHARACTER

Form and character in Sustain - Traditional Place Types are compact and community-focused. Residential fabric is close together and street-facing, with "missing middle" and other gentle density providing a diverse range of housing types. Small-scale retail or other complementary community-facing uses are encouraged at key nodes or intersections, with consistent street frontage.

MOBILITY

The historic street grid in Sustain - Traditional Place Types provides smaller urban blocks that encourage walking and community connections. Car dependency is discouraged, and close transit connections and bike infrastructure provides alternative modes for getting around the city. Vehicular access should use alleys where possible, and parking areas for larger multifamily buildings or community amenities should be located to the rear of street-facing buildings.

Open Space

OPEN SPACES ARE DESIGNED FOR ACTIVE RECREATION, COMMUNITY GATHERINGS, AND PUBLIC PROGRAMMING.

This Place Type is a key social, recreational, and environmental asset of Norfolk and offers residents a variety of activities while serving their adjacent neighborhoods. The intent of this Place Type is to capture the large open spaces within the city and recognize them as primary uses in those areas. Smaller open spaces, parks, etc. within neighborhoods are captured within the other Place Types as either primary or secondary land uses.

BY 2050 THESE PLACES WILL...

- Enhance access to meaningful open spaces for all Norfolk residents, as well as the pedestrian and bicycle linkages to them.
- Promote a mix of recreational activities to serve different user groups.
- Ensure flexibility in open spaces to accommodate evolving community needs and use of the spaces.
- Support programming and other activation to maximize community engagement and social interaction.

● PRIMARY LAND USES
○ SECONDARY LAND USES

Land Uses left blank are not supported

- ● Open Space
- ○ Conservation
  - *Single-Unit Residential*
  - *ADUs*
  - *Multi-family, small-scale*
  - *Multi-family, large-scale*
  - *Mixed Use*
- ○ Commercial/ retail, small-scale office
  - *Office, large-scale*
  - *Research & Development*
- ○ Institutional
- ○ Entertainment
  - *Utility/ Transportation*
  - *Light Industrial*
  - *Heavy Industrial*

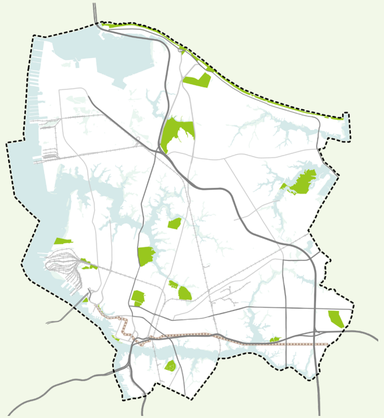


(City of Norfolk)

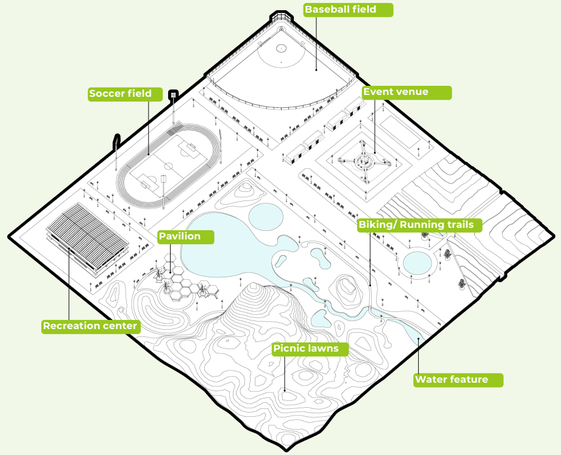


(City of Norfolk)

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?



CHARACTER

Open Spaces are designed to accommodate a diverse range of activities, including parks, sports fields, amphitheaters, public plazas, and play spaces for residents of all ages and abilities. Amenities for passive recreation such as seating areas and gardens are also encouraged to create environments that foster social interactions. This Place Type should be flexible in its design to allow for changing community needs and diverse future programming.

MOBILITY

Open Spaces are highly accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists, with dedicated and well-signaled streets connecting them to nearby residential and commercial areas. Programming, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, and wayfinding encourage use throughout the day for these Place Types. Motor vehicles are limited to perimeter parking areas to ensure safety of all users, and infrastructure elements like bicycle racks and transit stops are located nearby to enhance accessibility to Norfolk residents.

Conservation

CONSERVATION AREAS PRIORITIZE ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION AND PASSIVE RECREATION.

This Place Type ensures the protection of our natural landscapes, wetlands, living shorelines, wildlife habitats, and ecological resilience. Conservation areas also serve as key components of Norfolk's urban resilience strategy where appropriate.

BY 2050 THESE PLACES WILL...

- Ensure long-term protection of ecologically and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Achieve urban resilience strategies.
- Encourage ecological education and community stewardship.
- Incorporate passive recreation where it aligns with the conservation goals of these spaces.

● PRIMARY LAND USES
○ SECONDARY LAND USES

Land Uses left blank are not supported

- ○ Open Space
- ● Conservation
- *Single-Unit Residential*
- *ADUs*
- *Multi-family, small-scale*
- *Multi-family, large-scale*
- *Mixed Use*
- *Commercial/ retail, small-scale office*
- *Office, large-scale*
- *Research & Development*
- *Institutional*
- *Entertainment*
- *Utility/ Transportation*
- *Light Industrial*
- *Heavy Industrial*

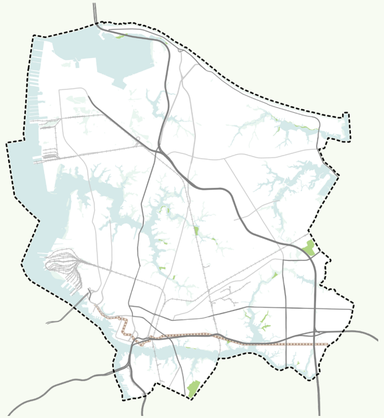


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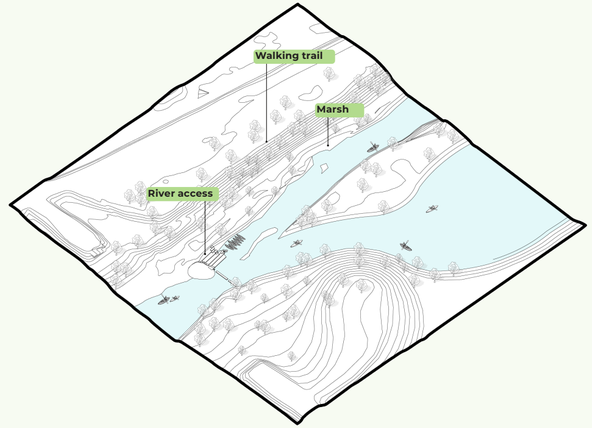


(City of Norfolk)

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE?



CHARACTER

Conservation Place Types are primarily natural landscapes where ecological resilience are their primary character. This Place Type includes natural areas that undergo ecological restoration efforts, and have components such as native plantings and wetland buffers to enhance biodiversity and support climate resilience. Public access may be allowed through trails and scenic overlooks in designated areas for environmental education and low-impact recreation, ensuring that Norfolk residents can experience nature with minimal habitat disruption.

MOBILITY

Mobility within Conservation Place Types is limited to pedestrian access through trails, boardwalks, or similar paths. Infrastructure is intentionally minimal to reduce environmental impact, with no vehicular access permitted. Connections to surrounding urban areas through bicycle paths and greenway linkages are encouraged to ensure that nature remains accessible to Norfolk residents while protecting the ecological function of this Place Type.

Planning Focus Areas

PLANNING FOCUS AREAS DESIGNATE THREE UNIQUE AREAS OF NORFOLK AS A PRIORITY FOR TRANSFORMATION.

More of an overlay than a strict Place Type, a Planning Focus Area indicates a commitment by the City of Norfolk to **create an equitable and targeted plan for the neighborhood in the near future**, with the intention to implement the plan by 2050.

NFK2050 identifies three distinct areas of the city as priorities for large-scale equitable transformation: Greater St. Paul's; Military Circle Area; and Southside. Though these areas are quite distinct from each other in character, form, community, and future vision, all three are to some extent in the process of planning for a more prosperous future for their current and future communities.

All three areas will require targeted investment, design and development attention to create the shared community-based vision for how they may be developed by 2050, with a particular emphasis on equity throughout the planning process.

PLACE TYPES:

GREATER ST. PAUL'S:

- Community Mixed Use

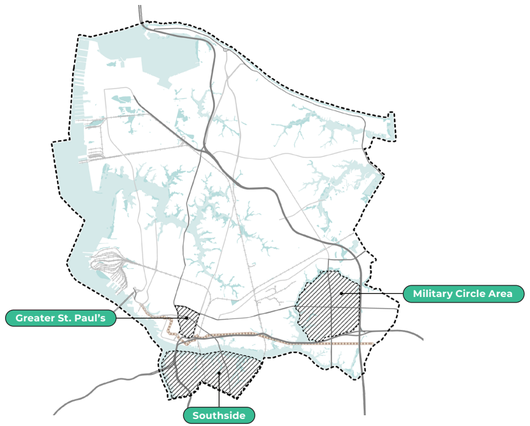
MILITARY CIRCLE AREA:

- Regional Activity Center
- Corridor Mixed Use
- Innovation and Production
- Sustain - Suburban
- Open Space
- Conservation

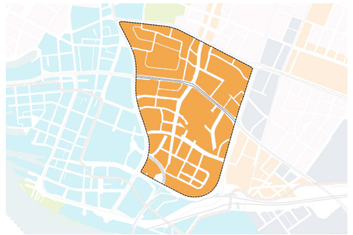
SOUTHSIDE:

- Sustain - Traditional
- Innovation and Production
- Open Space
- Conservation

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



GREATER ST. PAUL'S

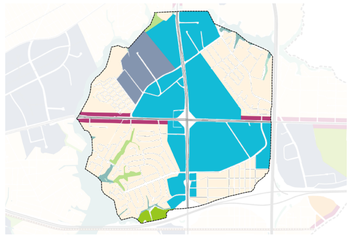




(City of Norfolk)

The St. Paul's Neighborhood Transformation is already underway thanks to a large-scale mixed-income housing redevelopment integrated with innovative resilience infrastructure. Future phases should build on the strong community-focused work to date.

MILITARY CIRCLE AREA

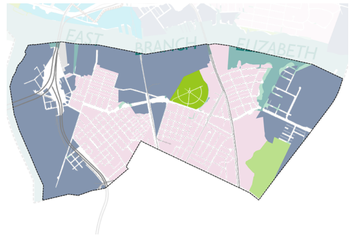


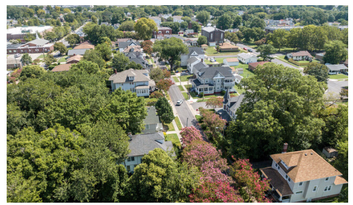


(City of Norfolk)

Military Circle, on high ground and centered around a largely vacant City-owned mall and a major highway interchange, has the potential to become a major destination. A redeveloped Military Circle should combine expanded transit access, mixed-income housing, commercial, retail, and entertainment uses.

SOUTHSIDE





(homes.com)

Southside — south of the Elizabeth River, and comprised of the Berkley, Campostella, and Campostella Heights neighborhoods — has faced challenges of investment and connectivity for decades. A large-scale neighborhood plan should center equitable reinvestment, mobility, resilience, and economic opportunity for this historic area.

Transit Supportive Areas

THE TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE AREAS ARE, BROADLY, AREAS SURROUNDING SOME OF NORFOLK'S EXISTING LIGHT RAIL STATIONS.

An area designated as a Transit Supportive Area (TSA) includes **strong enough transit access to encourage higher density development,** and a diversity of land uses that promote access to neighborhood-serving amenities, shifting away from a dependency on car travel. These areas foster traditional neighborhood design principles such as pedestrian-oriented circulation, multimodal connectivity, preservation of natural areas, and integration of mixed-use and mixed-income housing.

The vision for Norfolk's Transit Supportive Areas includes a mix of employment and residential centers with key community amenities, promoting transit, bicycle, and pedestrian activity and discouraging lower density auto-oriented land uses.

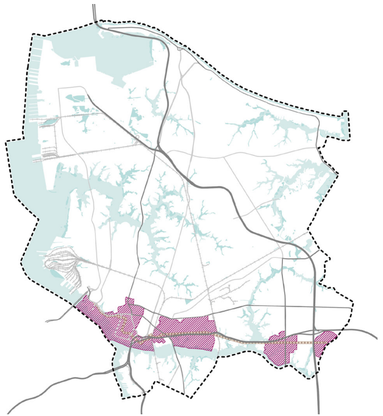
As one of the key recommendations of NFK2050 is to expand high-capacity transit north from the Light Rail line, and as the Naval Station Norfolk Transit Corridor Project continues, there may be future opportunities to add additional Transit Supportive Areas to this map.

● PRIMARY LAND USES
○ SECONDARY LAND USES

Land Uses left blank are not supported

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  Conservation
- ● Single-Unit Residential
- ● ADUs
- ● Multi-family, small-scale
- ● Multi-family. large-scale
- ● Mixed Use
- ● Commercial/ retail, small-scale office
- ○ Office, large-scale
- ○ Research & Development
- ○ Institutional
- ○ Entertainment
  Utility/ Transportation
  Light Industrial
  Heavy Industrial

WHERE IN THE CITY ARE THEY?



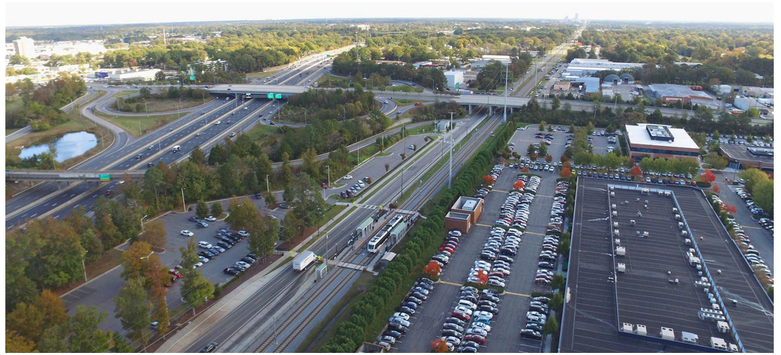
Transit Supportive Area

NOTE: Primary and Secondary Land Use guidance for TSAs supersedes an underlying Sustain Place Type. (All other Place Types supersede TSAs.)

NOTE: TSAs are also considered part of Norfolk's Urban Development Areas (UDAs), as described on p.73.



Fort Norfolk Station TSA (HRT)



Military Circle Station TSA (HRT)



Newtown Road Station TSA (HRT)



Newtown Road Station TSA (HRT)



Newtown Road Station TSA (HRT)

04

What We Will Achieve

PLAN PILLARS, GOALS, ACTIONS, AND STRATEGIES

The heart of NFK2050 is in its policies around where and how to grow, and what actions to take to make a more equitable, resilient, and inclusive city.

Each of the four Plan Pillars feature broad, far-reaching Goals aimed to achieve the overall Plan Vision, along with Actions—and in some cases, specific Strategies—for how to get there. These Actions provide a clear direction toward 2050 while allowing flexibility in how the work is carried out, enabling the city to adapt to change and respond to a range of future scenarios.



(City of Norfolk)

Goals, Actions, & Strategies

How to Use This Section:

NFK2050's **Goals**, **Actions**, and **Strategies** are where all the ideas for how to make forward progress in our city are collected. Some Actions continue and strengthen important work already underway, while others introduce new ideas—often supported by multiple Strategies for how to achieve them. Actions are listed by topic area rather than in order of priority.

This is a GOAL. A Goal is an aspirational statement for what Norfolk will do.

Each Pillar has 4 or 5 big, ambitious Goals to accomplish by 2050, in order to help achieve the Plan Vision.

This is an ACTION. An Action is an idea for one thing we can do to help accomplish the Goal.

Each Goal and Action is numbered for ease of cross-reference with our Implementation matrix (App. III).



Celebrating Our Community / Goal 1

GOAL I:

Celebrate and Preserve Neighborhood Identity, Character, and Histories

Discover and promote the unique stories, histories, culture, and character of Norfolk's neighborhoods; highlight and promote Norfolk's **unique sense of place,** community, culture, and identity to benefit existing and future residents, employees, and visitors.

Norfolk is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own unique character, making up a vibrant melting pot of people, cultures, and ideas. With so many things to celebrate, it is paramount that Norfolk continues to market and spotlight these strengths to our own residents, while also attracting new residents and visitors to the city. Storytelling, wayfinding, and social events can all be harnessed to better highlight the variety and complexity of our places and our people, connecting residents to each other and rooting them in their unique places.

Norfolk's landscapes and buildings have held space for countless lives and stories. Our efforts to preserve, share, and tell our histories can and should continue to evolve, incorporating equity, resilience, and accessibility into our historic preservation practices.

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This is a BEST PRACTICE from another city or community, showing one way this idea has been accomplished elsewhere. They are meant to be inspirational and demonstrate a way to make the idea happen.

You'll also see some **LOCAL SUCCESSES** from around Norfolk that we want to celebrate and build on.

Each Goal also has some explanation of exactly how and where we see this Goal making the most impact in the city, and how it grew from what we found and what we heard.

These are STRATEGIES. Not every Action needs Strategies, but for some Actions, we have identified specific steps that should be taken in order to accomplish the Action.

What does all this mean for me as a Norfolk resident?

As a Comprehensive Plan, NFK2050 includes specific actions and strategies that need to be in this document for regulatory purposes. Some of them are more internal, for City of Norfolk Departments or partner agencies (see Chapter 5 for more details). **Norfolk residents also gave us feedback and ideas that we have incorporated into the body of this chapter.**

Some of the big ideas throughout the Pillar sections are denoted with a **"Big Idea" icon,** as seen below. Those ideas are also called out at the front of each Pillar in a brief summary of the **ideas that are likely to have the biggest positive impact on Norfolk residents, workers, or stakeholders.**

this icon means "Big idea!"

How do these ideas reference the Future Land Use Plan (Ch. 3)?

As you flip through the Plan Pillars, keep in mind that the Future Land Use Plan (Chapter 3) shows where and how we want to grow. Some of the Actions are citywide—e.g., regulatory or programmatic — but many of them are **place-specific,** and refer to areas in the city where they will be **most impactful.** All 4 Pillars end with a summary spread building on the Future Land Use Map and calling out some of the Actions we see as most rooted in specific types of places around the city. These spreads help to **"connect the dots" between what we will do — the Actions and Strategies — and where we will do it - the Future Land Use Map.**



Summary Pillar spreads combine key Actions with the Future Land Use Map

Who will be responsible for these ideas, and when will they happen?

There are many partners who all work collaboratively to make change happen in Norfolk—both within and outside of City Hall. Each of NFK2050's Actions and Strategies in this chapter will have a single department, agency, or organization responsible for ensuring the work is actually underway or complete by 2050. Some may be relatively quick to complete, and some may take all 25 years (or more), but in every Plan Goal, there is work we can begin right after the plan is adopted.

All of these details are outlined in **Appendix III - Implementation,** where you can find a breakdown of each Action and Strategy including timeframe, lead, partner, scale of impact, and other information about how, when, and who will make the idea happen. These are cross-referenced by Goal and Action number for tracking purposes.

In short, the Goals, Actions, and Strategies (Ch. 4) show **WHAT** we will do; the Future Land Use Plan (Ch. 3) shows **WHERE** we will do it; and the Implementation Matrix (Appendix III) shows **WHO** will lead and **WHEN** it might happen.

Celebrating Our Community

Norfolk's sense of community can be understood through multiple lenses. From historic districts that reflect centuries of change, to mermaids, murals, and neighborhood festivals, the character of Norfolk lives not only in our built environment, but in the stories our communities continue to tell. Preserving and celebrating this richness is essential to shaping a future that is both rooted and forward-looking.

Community is reflected in Norfolk's many "third places," public spaces where neighbors gather, socialize, and build relationships outside of work and home. Civic leagues, parks, schools, libraries, and churches are part of the city's strong social infrastructure. Our public art, from mermaids to community murals, also highlight our strong local pride. These spaces help define what it means to live here, and why so many choose to stay.

But celebration is also a form of investment. Supporting safe, vibrant, walkable neighborhoods means ensuring people can meet their daily needs within a short walk, whether that's a grocery store, a transit stop, or a local café. Prioritizing our historically underrepresented communities, and telling their stories through events and public spaces, is key to honoring the full identity of the city.

In a time of regional growth and demographic change, Norfolk's history and character can be a powerful asset. It draws new residents, retains longtime neighbors, and connects us to each other. By investing in our stories, spaces, and people, we can ensure our identity isn't just preserved, but lived, shared, and celebrated.

(City of Norfolk)



> **Seeing all the great things that the city was doing between the light rail and the nightlife downtown, and a lot of really interesting and progressive things were happening in Norfolk—I just knew that I would end up back here.**
>
> — Norfolk resident, Workshop #1, October 2023

Celebrating Our Community
COMMUNITY VISION



(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

What We Heard:

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

Goals:

GOAL 1:
Celebrate and Preserve Neighborhood Identity, Character, and Histories

GOAL 2:
Support Complete and Healthy Neighborhoods

GOAL 3:
Support Safe and Vibrant Places

GOAL 4:
Support and Strengthen Community Facilities and Services

Big Ideas:

- **Highlight city neighborhoods** by incorporating neighborhood specific wayfinding, branding, and history campaigns by Ward.
- **Designate new historic neighborhoods and landmarks,** prioritizing Norfolk's communities whose histories have not been widely told.
- Create **Cultural Corridors** throughout the city, where streets/districts are themed around the history/identity of the neighborhood (e.g., art installations, historical markers, and events).
- Host regional, national, and international events and **attract new events** to the city.
- Promote **mixed-use development** with active ground floors, community amenities, and pedestrian-friendly streetscape improvements.
- **Test public amenities,** programming, infrastructure, and sites, gathering data and community buy-in for permanent improvements.
- **Assess food deserts in the city** to improve access to healthy food.
- Pursue incentives for **building improvements** to encourage property owners to invest in their buildings, storefronts, and houses.
- Equitably **expand public art** opportunities in every neighborhood.
- Build on existing **cultural arts districts** to ensure local artists and makers have access to affordable studio spaces, live/work options, and exhibition venues.
- **Fund public realm improvements,** walkability and placemaking efforts, transforming Norfolk's neighborhoods into vibrant destinations.
- **Connect existing and future city facilities** to their surrounding neighborhoods using safe and fully accessible multimodal networks.

GOAL 1:

Celebrate and Preserve Neighborhood Identity, Character, and Histories

Discover and promote the unique stories, histories, culture, and character of Norfolk's neighborhoods; highlight and promote Norfolk's **unique sense of place,** community, culture, and identity to benefit existing and future residents, employees, and visitors.

Norfolk is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own unique character, making up a vibrant melting pot of people, cultures, and ideas. With so many things to celebrate, it is paramount that Norfolk continues to market and spotlight these strengths to our own residents, while also attracting new residents and visitors to the city. Storytelling, wayfinding, and social events can all be harnessed to better highlight the variety and complexity of our places and our people, connecting residents to each other and rooting them in their unique places.

Norfolk's landscapes and buildings have held space for countless lives and stories. Our efforts to preserve, share, and tell our histories can and should continue to evolve, incorporating equity, resilience, and accessibility into our historic preservation practices.

1. Highlight city neighborhoods and showcase several neighborhoods per year, raising awareness of the wide range of diverse communities in the city.

a. Inventory and document all methods by which neighborhoods are currently highlighted and branded throughout the city.

b. Prioritize neighborhoods not traditionally served by preservation or placemaking initiatives to collect and tell new stories.

c. Identify "community champions" and empower them to help prepare and implement community engagement strategies, building on the NFK2050 Champions program and the Neighbors Building Neighborhoods Academy.

d. Incorporate neighborhood-specific wayfinding, branding, and history campaigns by Ward, on a rotational basis.

e. Continue to support community-led block parties, Open Streets, or other pop-up events across the city to build social cohesion, especially in highlighted neighborhoods.

2. Collect, preserve, and distribute oral histories and **incorporate innovative storytelling and emerging technologies** in preservation work to broaden audiences.

a. Continue and expand City-sponsored historic survey and designation initiatives by including oral histories, particularly when surveying unknown or underrepresented histories.

b. Establish a digital storytelling platform where residents can contribute photos, stories, and historical insights to share with each other.

c. Create storytelling events in Norfolk's neighborhoods to encourage intergenerational sharing and to build cross-cultural empathy.

d. Support scholarship and City-sponsored historic surveys of the recent past (e.g., the past 30 years).

e. Support programs that include immersive experiences such as reenactments, interactive exhibits, or virtual reality (VR) experiences at historic and maritime sites.

BEST PRACTICES:

AUDIBLE'S "STORY BUS", NEWARK, NJ

Newark's Story Bus is a colorful mobile hub for collecting and sharing the stories of the city's diverse residents, piggybacking on community events and inviting stories, testimonials, and oral histories.



(Talking Eyes Media)

f. Create and maintain digital maps and other georeferencing applications to connect the public with local history, currently designated historic sites, eligible historic sites, and other preservation initiatives.

g. Georeference aerial images, Sanborn maps, and other digitized resources to support innovative programming and research.

3. Update the City's **Local Historic District Guidelines** and establish a process for ongoing reviews and updates.

4. Update the City's ***Architectural Survey Update Work Plan***, and fund recommended survey and designation initiatives.

> ***Norfolk's Architectural Survey Update Work Plan:*** *A City document inventorying the city's historic and cultural architecture. Accessible via the NFK2050 website.*

a. Conduct an audit of currently designated and surveyed resources and prioritize underrepresented narratives and resources in future survey and designation initiatives.

5. Support the promotion, and in some cases designation, of **historic neighborhoods and landmarks**, prioritizing Norfolk's communities whose histories have not been widely told.

a. Include more diverse stories and broader representation of narratives by revisiting and updating ***Norfolk's National Register of Historic Places*** nominations.

> ***National Register of Historic Places:*** *The United States' official list of sites, buildings, structures, districts, and objects deemed worthy of preservation for historic significance or great artistic value.*

b. Pursue and expand funding to support preservation and celebrate heritage in Norfolk's marginalized and underrepresented communities.

c. Acknowledge and memorialize historical injustices in situ (e.g., sites of Norfolk's former slave trade, etc.).

d. Explore local historic designation for neighborhoods experiencing redevelopment and growth pressures to help preserve their unique character.

e. Explore different kinds of local designations, including types that focus on important intangible cultural histories.

BEST PRACTICES:

LA ALMA LINCOLN PARK HISTORIC CULTURAL DISTRICT, DENVER, CO

La Alma Lincoln Park was designated as a Historic Cultural District in 2021, recognizing the neighborhood not for its architectural but for its cultural significance in Denver's Chicano community.



(Benjamin Rasmussen)

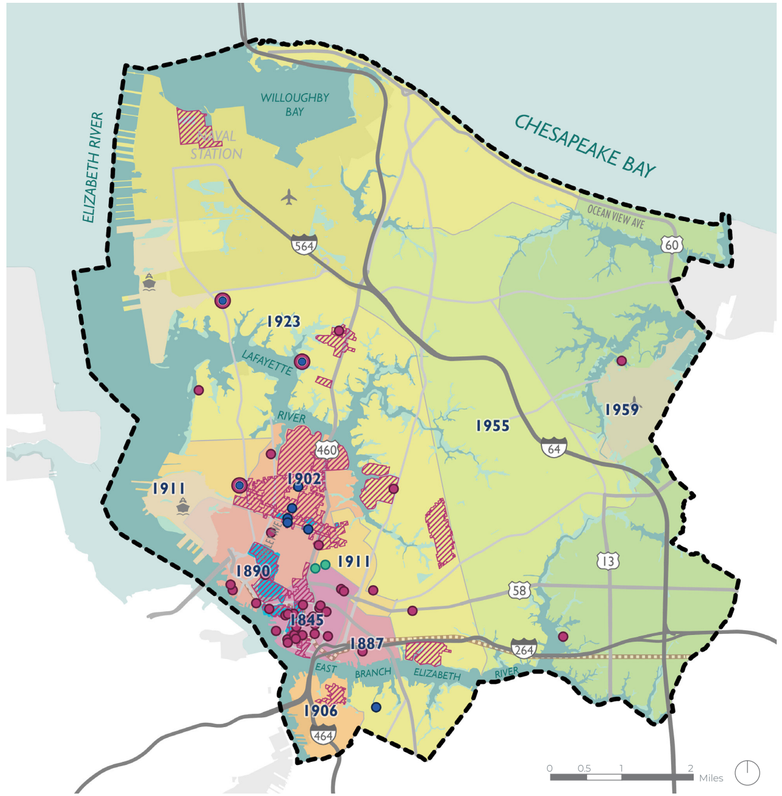


Figure 1: Norfolk's Historic Resources and Historic Annexations

Source: City of Norfolk; National Register of Historic Places; Virginia Landmarks Register

STATE/ NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

- Lafayette Residence Park Historic District
- West Freemason Street Area Historic District
- Colonial Place Historic District
- Jamestown Exposition Site Buildings
- Ballentine Place Historic District
- Ghent Historic District
- Riverview Historic District
- North Ghent Historic District
- Downtown Norfolk Historic District
- Williamston-Woodland Historic District
- Norfolk & Western Railroad Historic District
- Park Place Historic District
- Virginia National Bank Headquarters Historic District
- Norfolk Auto Row Historic District
- Cruser Place Historic District
- Chesterfield Heights Historic District
- Berkley North Historic District
- Downtown Norfolk Financial Historic District
- Granby Street Suburban Institutional Corridor
- Winona Historic District

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

- Ghent Historic District
- West Freemason Historic District
- East Freemason Historic District
- Downtown Historic District
- Norfolk & Western Railroad Historic District

DESIGNATED/ LISTED HISTORIC CEMETERY

STATE/NATIONAL INDIVIDUAL LISTING

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

ANNEXATION:

- 1845
- 1887
- 1890
- 1902
- 1906
- 1911
- 1923
- 1955
- 1959

6. Share historic sites and stories broadly, ensuring **accessibility for all**.

a. Incorporate barrier-free urban design, landscape, and architectural measures into the City's Historic District Design Guidelines, to expand seamless physical access at historic sites open to the public.

b. Incorporate user-friendly measures (e.g., 502-compliant measures) into all online and digital historic resources.

7. Establish an ongoing program that maintains existing **historic trails and markers** (e.g., the Cannonball Trail), and provides a mechanism for expanding and connecting historic trails.

8. Encourage the use of **"deconstruction" practices during the removal of historic buildings** and structures, as opposed to demolition, focusing on salvaging materials for reuse.

BEST PRACTICES:

SAN ANTONIO DECONSTRUCTION AND SALVAGE INITIATIVE, SAN ANTONIO, TX

Sparked by sustainability concerns, the City of San Antonio runs a robust building deconstruction and material reuse program helping residents divert building waste from landfills into new construction sites.



(San Antonio Reuse)

9. Promote purposeful infill development to **adhere to existing neighborhood form and character**.

a. Promote the awareness and relevance of pattern books and guidelines for developers (e.g., Missing Middle Pattern Book, Design Principles for Multifamily Development) about the range of housing types that are unique to Norfolk and complement housing options in the region.

b. Evaluate if additional pattern books may be needed to ensure new infill development and renovations are consistent with neighborhood character, and update regulations accordingly.

c. Explore further revisions to zoning regulations to ensure that infill development is compatible with surrounding properties, using the Future Land Use Plan and its Place Types for guidance.

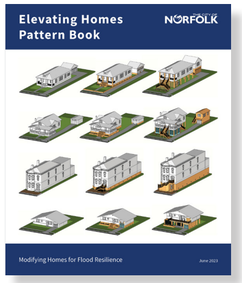
d. Develop specific architectural guidelines for maintaining and updating houses in any newly designated historic or cultural district.

e. Explore programs and resources to provide design assistance for property owners complying with the best practices in pattern books.

10. Encourage the use of the *Elevating Homes Pattern Book* to support cost-effective and resilient home modifications with design and construction guidance to **help homeowners adapt to flood risks** while maintaining the historic integrity and character of the home.

LOCAL SUCCESS:

ELEVATING HOMES PATTERN BOOK



The goal of this pattern book is to provide safe, resilient homes by raising homes out of the floodplain, creating opportunities to reduce flood insurance costs as well as costs associated with the preparation for and recovery from major flood events. Using the pattern book also allows owners to elevate their homes responsibly - retaining the architectural character of their neighborhoods.

11. Create **Cultural Corridors** throughout the city, where streets/districts are themed around the history/identity of the neighborhood (e.g., art installations, historical markers, and events). Prioritize areas that do not currently have these physical markers and elements.



(WRT)

12. Conduct a **hazard and disaster vulnerability analysis** of historic resources that includes recommendations for adaptation strategies.

13. Incorporate **hazard mitigation** and recovery for historic and cultural resources into local hazard mitigation planning efforts.

14. Preserve and research Norfolk's **historic cemeteries,** especially in underrepresented communities or those with fewer historic resources.

a. Explore funding resources for using tools like Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) to support archaeological research.

b. Work with libraries/archives to document findings.

c. Survey known historic cemeteries, particularly those related to underrepresented communities or those threatened by climate change hazards.

15. Create and brand a **unified Norfolk identity** to align outreach efforts across the city, using the current City of Norfolk branding as a basis.

BEST PRACTICES:

RVA BRANDING, RICHMOND, VA

Venture Richmond, an organization devoted to enhancing the vitality of the Richmond community, worked with students at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) to create a city brand and logo as a way of building pride within the city and attracting attention outside of it. The widespread community buy-in to the RVA concept and the ripples it has caused has provided an identity for the city and an outlet for its energy.

(Venture Richmond)

16. Launch a **"Welcome to Norfolk"** brand/identity program that positions Norfolk as a welcoming city for new residents, immigrants, and military families.

a. Coordinate between City departments and external partners to manage orientation for new arrivals with available housing, small business support, education, healthcare, language assistance, and local services.

b. Explore incentives and programs to attract remote workers and entrepreneurs to move to Norfolk.

BEST PRACTICES:

TULSA REMOTE PROGRAM, TULSA, OK

The Tulsa Remote program offers a $10,000 grant and various benefits to attract remote workers to live and work in Tulsa. By 2023, the program had welcomed over 2,000 participants, significantly contributing to the local economy and has been credited with generating over $62 million in new labor income for Tulsa.

17. Guide and support new **heritage tourism** strategies, highlighting and celebrating lesser-known historic and cultural sites in partnership with local organizations and community champions.

18. Leverage Norfolk's Downtown waterfront as a gateway for tourism by developing a unique Norfolk experience around the water.

a. Connect cruise ship visitors to tourist attractions and tours, especially in and around Downtown.

b. Promote longer tourism visits by linking sites of interest, creating communication or programmatic alignments.

c. Develop a plan to ensure the continued vitality of Norfolk's historic waterfront and pursue funding mechanisms to support maintenance and improvements.

19. Promote and enhance the **natural and recreational resources** that provide tourism-related economic advantages (e.g., the Elizabeth River Trail).

20. Develop a ***Sustainable Tourism Plan*** focused on economic, environmental, and social sustainability in partnership with interested stakeholders (e.g. transportation agencies, hotels, museums, etc.).

Sustainable Tourism Plan: A plan for encouraging tourism that is not just economically beneficial, but also takes into consideration long-term environmental and social sustainability so as not to negatively impact the destination (i.e., allowing fewer tourists into ecologically sensitive zones, hiring local employees at a living wage, etc).

21. Continue to host regional, national, and international events and **attract new events** to the city.



Harborfest (City of Norfolk)

a. Attract niche and growing sporting events (e.g., criterium bike races, pickleball tournaments, etc.) that do not require a large structural capacity but have a large benefit in the local economy.

b. Work with other cities in the region to identify and pursue opportunities to attract large events with mutual economic and cultural benefits.

22. Leverage city events and its tourism attraction to **promote existing local businesses**.

a. Distribute travel vouchers that can be used in local small businesses to promote local tourism.

GOAL 2:

Support Complete and Healthy Neighborhoods

Enhance and encourage **walkable mixed-use districts** connected to city services, amenities, transit, and nearby neighborhoods, supporting healthy communities along the way.

Some of Norfolk's neighborhoods are equipped for residents to access amenities, but others require leaving the community to meet daily needs. Not everyone can rely on cars to run errands or find a comfortable place to gather outside their home. Carefully planned neighborhood centers can use the tools of urban design, placemaking, and a diverse mix of businesses and amenities to make lively community hubs for all. In turn, this thoughtful planning will help improve both the physical and mental health of our communities.

1. Identify districts, in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan, to promote **mixed-use development** with active ground floors, community amenities, and pedestrian-friendly streetscape improvements.

a. Assess current commercial districts and their amenities to understand where key uses are missing (e.g., grocery stores, pharmacies, libraries, coffee shops, laundromats, banks, plazas/seating areas, etc.) and what is accessible for pedestrians and cyclists in adjacent neighborhoods (e.g., conduct a walking audit, etc.).

b. Develop a list of areas with missing amenities as a focus for targeted physical and economic improvements.

c. Encourage shared use parking, especially in Community Mixed-Use, Corridor Mixed-Use, Regional Activity Center, and Sustain – Traditional Character Place Types, so that excess space in business parking lots can be used by neighboring business patrons or residents who live in the area, opening up on-street parking for other uses (e.g., bike lanes, rain gardens, etc.).

d. Target streetscape improvements in these districts for green infrastructure, seating areas, tree planting, wayfinding, and other placemaking initiatives.

e. Promote adaptive reuse, façade and signage improvements, and vacant building reuse in target districts to accommodate new business types.

f. Continue to provide grants for strategic commercial corridors, focusing on areas within the Community Mixed-Use and Corridor Mixed-Use Place Types, to improve facades, support small businesses, and target streetscape improvements.

g. Support existing City programs, such as the ***Capital Access Program (CAP) and Commercial Corridor Program***, and explore creating new programs to help fill financial gaps in the marketplace for entrepreneurs to either start or expand their business and revitalize commercial corridors.

CAP: The City of Norfolk's Capital Access Program provides alternative and affordable financing for new, existing, and expanding businesses.

2. Streamline and reform regulations, form guidelines, and zoning in target areas to **encourage a range of commercial and community uses** and ground-floor storefronts.

a. Support and accommodate outdoor seating and ***"streeteries"*** in designated areas to bring commercial activity into public and private spaces, utilizing the Norfolk Outdoor Spaces Guidelines.

Streeteries: an outdoor dining area, typically located on sidewalks or in on-street parking spaces, that is designed to allow restaurants, cafes and bars to expand their seating options beyond their indoor space.

b. Encourage code changes to allow food trucks in public spaces and to incentivize pop-up eating establishments.

c. Allow street vendors and on-site produce sales in designated public areas to supplement larger commercial businesses.

d. Consider a "Livable Communities Initiative" to streamline by-right development of mixed-use projects, integrating walkable and transit-oriented streets that are easily accessible by surrounding neighborhoods.

BEST PRACTICES:

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA

The LCI is a group that advocates for neighborhoods holistically combining mixed-use housing (3-5 stories), complete streets, climate resilience, and multimodal transit, suggesting zoning and building plan standards to accommodate these shifts in urban fabric.



(L.A. Livable Communities Initiative)

3. Leverage longer redevelopment timelines to **test public amenities**, programming, infrastructure, and sites, gathering data and community buy-in for permanent improvements.

a. Implement ***tactical urbanist*** initiatives like pop-up plazas, food truck parks, and parklets in parking spaces to test out the configuration and location of public activities in key districts.

> ***Tactical urbanism:*** *Commonly known as DIY Urbanism or Planning-by-Doing, tactical urbanism refers to a city, organizational, and/or citizen-led approach to neighborhood building using short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions to catalyze long-term change. Common examples include pop-up parks, temporary bike lanes, painted crosswalks, and outdoor seating installations.*

b. Co-locate pop-up uses at existing social infrastructure (community centers, rec centers, etc.) to incorporate more "daily needs" for local residents (e.g., groceries, food, coffee, etc.) in a "one-stop-shop".



Pop Up Park (WPA)

4. Evaluate the city's current providers of fresh food (grocery stores, produce markets, farmers' markets, community gardens) to **assess *food deserts*,** working with existing entities such as the Norfolk Food Policy Council.

> ***Food desert:*** *Food deserts are geographic areas where residents' access to affordable, healthy food options (especially fresh fruits and vegetables) is restricted or nonexistent due to the absence of grocery stores within convenient traveling distance.*

Norfolk's existing gathering places can be celebrated and built on, with community-led placemaking intiatives, pop-up events, branding and signage, public art, and support for small businesses.

I would love to see improvements that make people want to come out and celebrate! — Norfolk resident, Phase 1 Engagement



Colonial Ave/ W 22nd St: AFTER

a. Support public-private partnerships to improve access to healthy food and eliminate food deserts within the city.

b. Incentivize affordable, healthy food grocers within food desert areas through partnerships and financial or regulatory tools.

c. Parter with Norfolk Public Schools to develop creative ways to encourage healthy eating at school and at home.

d. Consider zoning changes for uses that do not provide some level of fresh produce.



(City of Norfolk)

5. Encourage **community gardens and urban agriculture** to help meet the need for equitable fresh food access in collaboration with grassroots community leaders and support existing programs (e.g., Grow Norfolk).

a. Evaluate and define agricultural uses in the Zoning Ordinance, specifically to allow for small-scale community-focused food production.

b. Target regulation reform and incentives to encourage community gardens and urban agriculture in underserved areas.

c. Make publicly-controlled vacant land available for community-facing agricultural uses.

d. Collaborate with Parks/Recreation facilities and local School facilities to use open space for teaching gardens.

e. Assess and revise codes to allow for rooftop farming.

6. Support the efforts of the Norfolk Department of Public Health and other industry partners to **improve the health and quality of life in the city**.

a. Evaluate whether zoning regulations or land use policy changes can be made to mitigate contributions to Norfolk's key public health issues, as listed in the Department's Community Health Needs Assessment.

b. Support the Norfolk Department of Public Health in its development of a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) and assist with implementation.

7. Consider a **Health in all Policies (HiAP)** approach, which integrates community health into all significant policy decisions and documents.

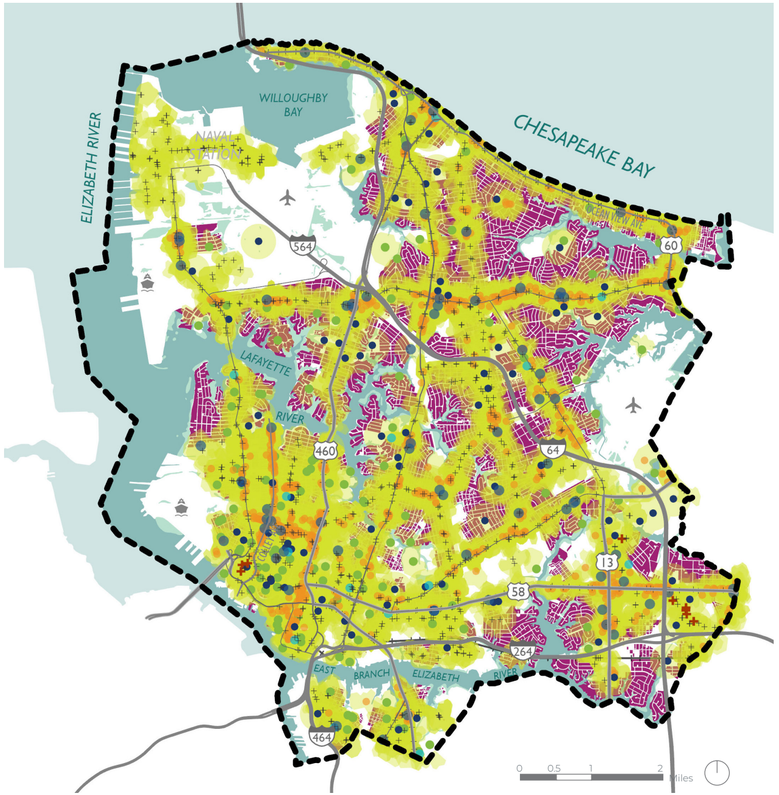


Figure 2: Local (¼ mile) walking distance to residents' daily needs and transit access

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2022; City of Norfolk

8. Consider **representation from health professions on City boards and commissions.**

9. Invest in programs, such as **Neighbors Building Neighborhoods**, that build capacity and social capital among residents to work together to identify and mobilize the positive attributes of their neighborhood (assets), invest through improvements to their homes and neighborhood blocks, and position them as excellent places to live.

10. Continue to **support home maintenance** and other home improvement programs and initiatives.



Beach clean up (City of Norfolk)



Neighbors Building Neighborhoods (WRT)

11. Pursue incentives for **building improvements** to encourage property owners to invest in their buildings, storefronts, and houses.

a. Implement the ***Healthy Housing Initiative*** and other programs to improve neighborhood health and safety by addressing unhealthy housing conditions and expanding rehabilitation programs to include rentals.

> ***Healthy Housing Initiative:*** *A public initiative to address unhealthy housing conditions, supported by the National League of Cities and led by the City of Norfolk, Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, and the Public Health Department.*

b. Provide clear technical assistance and explore incentives to existing and new residents to maintain and modernize properties.

c. Prioritize efforts to reinvest in neighborhoods with high home repair needs through available state and federal programs.

12. Incentivize and educate landowners and developers to **develop underutilized parcels** or vacant buildings to enhance neighborhood revitalization.

a. Consider enhancements or modifications to the vacant building registry program to further incentivize property owners to address and maintain abandoned residential and non-residential buildings.

13. Support the efforts of the Department of Neighborhood Services to **regulate and enforce** overgrown shrubs, trees, and other vegetation, as well as derelict buildings, returning abandoned housing to safe and useful occupancy (e.g., Derelict Structures Program).

14. Support the efforts of the Department of Human Services to advance rapid rehousing with case management, positive youth development programming, and senior focused activities through the **Program for Improving Capacity and Capability (PICC)**.

15. Support the activities of the **Community Engagement Street Team (CEST)** to improve resident access to benefits programs, assistance, and support services due to a lack of transportation.



Neighborhood revitalization (City of Norfolk)

GOAL 3:

Support Safe and Vibrant Places

Highlight Norfolk's diverse arts community, expand public art throughout the city's public spaces, and promote safe and vibrant spaces and activities.

The Mermaid City is full of creativity. Public art brings character into our open spaces, while cultural events, supportive workspaces, and arts districts provide important spaces for our artists and makers. But our culture doesn't end when the sun sets; finding ways to accommodate safe and vibrant nightlife and entertainment, while balancing safety and other regulations, is paramount to a culturally rich city.

1. Consider developing a **strategic arts and culture plan** to address all arts and cultural aspects of Norfolk (e.g., music, arts, entertainment) and set the tone for arts and culture policy within the city, such as where and when to install public art.

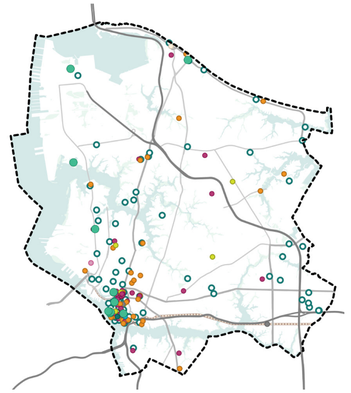
2. Sustain and equitably **expand public art** opportunities in every neighborhood.

a. Support and encourage private efforts to create and maintain temporary artwork such as murals, mermaids, utility box art, and billboards.

b. Explore funding opportunities to leverage new development to support art in public spaces (e.g., parks, plazas, waterfronts, rights-of-way, etc.).

c. Consider sites for public art on bridges and infrastructure, in our airport, at transit stops, and in other public places around the city.

d. Continue efforts by Norfolk Arts to map all public art in the city and communicate with residents and artists through their robust social media presence.





(City of Norfolk)



(WRT)

3. Incentivize **arts and cultural programming** in neighborhood-wide development, and for arts-based commercial corridor revitalization.

4. Support artists, makers, and cultural producers to be able to live and work in Norfolk.

a. Provide event-based opportunities for artists and makers to increase exposure.

b. Work with affordable housing developers to equitably incorporate live/work spaces for artists and makers, particularly from underrepresented communities.

c. Support affordable work and performance spaces for local and emerging artists, musicians, and makers, in order to lower the barrier to entry.

5. Build on existing **cultural arts districts** (e.g., NEON District) to ensure local artists and makers have access to affordable studio spaces, live/work options, and exhibition venues.

BEST PRACTICES:

SANTA FE RAILYARD, SANTA FE, NM

Santa Fe converted an industrial railyard into a cultural and arts hub, integrating historic preservation with local artistic expression to create a thriving place for artists and visitors.



(Tira Howard)

6. Continue to advocate for Norfolk's **nightlife and entertainment** industry to be vibrant and safe.

a. Consider creating/enhancing a position within the City of Norfolk to help stakeholders navigate permitting, guidelines, and other requirements.

b. Collaborate with the Downtown Norfolk Council to highlight and promote efforts like "A Safe Night Out," promoting safe, inclusive, and accessible entertainment and events.

7. Consider zoning amendments to **Neighborhood Protection standards** to include protections for higher density residential uses.



(City of Norfolk)

8. Support the efforts of the Department of Cultural Facilities, Arts, and Entertainment to **maintain and expand the programs and operations** of Seven Venues and the MacArthur Memorial, recognizing and celebrating these venues as the cultural and placemaking anchors that they are.

9. Explore **funding options and tools to fund public realm improvements**, walkability and placemaking efforts, transforming Norfolk's neighborhoods into vibrant destinations for local residents and tourists alike.

10. Evaluate development regulations to identify ways that the principles of **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)** can be incorporated into the design of newly developed and redeveloped areas.

11. Engage neighborhoods in the development and updating of policing strategies, building on existing programs of NPD's Community Services Division.

12. Explore the creation of an ongoing **"community walk"** program that includes neighborhood residents, City Council members, and an interdisciplinary group of City staff including police, fire, EMS, city planners, code enforcement, and neighborhood engagement staff.

13. Consider installing **"blue light" emergency phones** in select areas with high crime rates.

14. Consider the creation of a **Project Safe Neighborhood Program** that will work to address crime including gun violence among youth.

15. Consider the development of a **music audit** to better define the role that music plays in Norfolk and proactively manage how music and its related elements interact with the wider community.

a. Map music and wider cultural assets (e.g., public spaces, businesses, tourism assets, educational assets, community assets, number of artists, etc.) and overlay onto other data sets.

b. Engage stakeholders and community members through interviews, roundtable discussions, and surveys to help identify gaps in access and other challenges that music can be a part of addressing, such as a lack of cultural spaces or places in disadvantaged communities.

c. Conduct a comprehensive analysis to determine the economic impact of music, especially on the nighttime economy.

d. Assess zoning and city code regulations and implement reforms to help achieve the goals of the music audit.

BEST PRACTICES:

MUSIC AUDIT, HUNTSVILLE, AL

In 2018, the City of Huntsville, Alabama, invested in a music audit that has led to various implementations of the audit's recommendations, including the city hiring a full-time music officer within the economic development department who also works alongside the director of long-range planning. This has led to several music and place-based investments, including the opening of the $48m city-funded Orion Amphitheater and the redevelopment of the downtown performing arts Von Braun Center. New investments are also bolstering educational programs, while amended zoning is better managing new residential developments around music and cultural venues.



National Walking Day (City of Norfolk)

GOAL 4:

Support and Strengthen Community Facilities and Services

Evaluate, align, and plan community facilities and services to anticipate a wide range of community benefits for current and future demographics.

Norfolk provides a wide range of services and facilities to its residents, including recreation, schooling, safety, rescue, and utilities. Supporting these amenities and services promotes health, well-being, and a high quality of life for current and future residents, while also investing in a growing and resilient city population.



Granby High School (WRT)

1. Work with Norfolk Public Schools to begin **closing and consolidating** schools to better align facilities with projected school populations and needs, and evaluate the potential for repurposing closed buildings into new spaces for community benefit (e.g., community centers, housing, senior facilities, co-working spaces, etc.).

2. When evaluating potential sites for the location or relocation of a city facility or school, consider vulnerability to flooding and other resilience factors, using the **Future Land Use Plan and Vision 2100** as guides, and review noise and accident potential from aircraft operations using AICUZ.

3. Monitor school facility readiness, ensuring buildings are **well-maintained, safe, and accessible** to residents of all abilities for both learning and public use.

4. Evaluate schools to be designated as **emergency response centers**, increasing facility efficiency and raising public awareness of these sites as safe spaces for their surrounding communities.

5. Continue to coordinate with Norfolk Public Schools and Parks and Recreation to pursue shared recreational and park facilities to increase access of public resources outside of school hours (e.g., an **“open schoolyard”** program).

6. Connect existing and future city facilities to their surrounding neighborhoods using safe and fully accessible multimodal networks.

a. Connect any new public facility or site to the surrounding neighborhood through sidewalk or trail infrastructure and ensure safe access for community residents of all ages.

b. Incorporate best practices from Safe Routes to Schools or similar methodology to highlight the safest routes for surrounding communities to access schools and other facilities.



Walk to School Day (City of Norfolk)

c. Ensure comfort and safety for pedestrians and cyclists visiting city facilities through amenities like bus shelters (built new only when accessible by sidewalks) and bike parking.

7. Develop and maintain an **inventory and assessment** of all City-owned facilities to track the longevity and maintenance of buildings and their major systems (building envelope, plumbing, security, HVAC, roof, etc.) to help plan for repair and replacement.

8. Develop a **Library Facilities Master Plan** to help plan facility improvements for the next generation of library users, and to holistically incorporate other community-facing services.

a. Analyze libraries, community centers, and recreation centers to determine the need for creating, relocating, and/or consolidating facilities given the larger context of projected development and demographics.



National Read a Book Day (City of Norfolk)

9. Analyze **police precincts and fire stations** to determine the need for creating, relocating, and/or consolidating or closing stations given the larger context of projected development, creating equitable system-wide coverage and minimizing response times.

a. Decrease the average response time of emergency services (fire, police, and ambulance) during service calls.

b. Develop a long-term strategy for expanding training spaces within Norfolk and shared regional facilities for use.

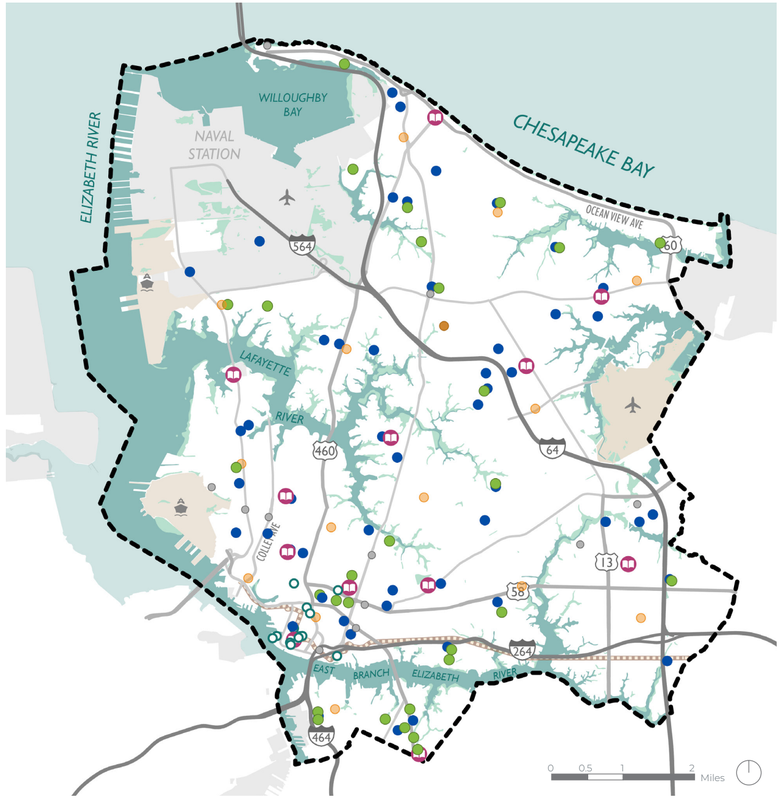


Figure 3: City Facilities

Source: City of Norfolk

CITY FACILITIES

- Library
- School
- Police Stations
- Fire Station
- Venue
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Works & Utilities

My favorite part of Norfolk is going to school, hanging out with my friends, going different places around here like North Side Park and local areas with my friend.

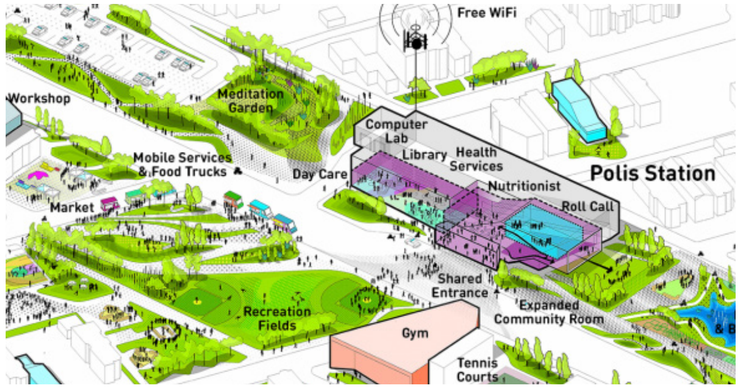
— Norfolk resident, Phase 1 Engagement

c. Consider incorporating community amenities like recreation and affordable housing into any new fire or police station, in order to foster cross-community relationships and maximize public benefits.

BEST PRACTICES:

STUDIO GANG, "POLIS STATION," CHICAGO, IL

Chicago has been intentionally including complementary community uses like recreation, after-school spaces, mental health facilities, and affordable housing into their redeveloped police stations.



"Polis Station" conceptual diagram (Studio Gang)

10. Support the implementation of the **Parks and Recreation Master Plan** as it relates to facility needs and improvements.

a. Assess the current park and trail system for opportunities to add fitness equipment, lighting, water stations, seating, shade, etc.

b. Assess facility operating hours to ensure buildings are open at times that best fit community needs.

c. Develop a maintenance plan for existing parks and facilities.

d. Assess current recreation centers for service overlaps and potential repurposing for fewer, larger ones.

e. Build larger, regional recreation centers for intergenerational and multipurpose use.

f. Geographically align parks, pools, and recreation centers better to equitably meet the needs of community.

g. Make necessary repairs and improvements to community parks, prioritizing those with the highest percentage of issues as depicted in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

h. Design parks, waterfront access, and facilities to be accommodating and inclusive for all populations.

i. Consider partnerships with non-profit and private sector organizations to assist in maintaining and operating facilities.

j. Design parks and recreational facilities to maximize flexibility of uses, adapting to meet evolving needs of nearby residents.

11. Support Norfolk Parks & Recreation's efforts to increase **programming for youth and seniors**.

12. Continue support of and consider enhancements to the **Norfolk Real Time Crime Data Center**, leveraging technology and advanced analytics to provide critical information to first responders, and assist with criminal investigations and community safety.

13. Explore opportunities to collaborate with neighboring localities to integrate police, fire, and EMS dispatch systems in order to **reduce response times across city lines**.

14. Work with the Department of Human Services and community organizations to establish a center that provides **language resources** to community members, to include interpretation and translation, non-native English learning programs, and assistance in accessing City services and programs. The center may co-locate with other human service providers and facilities.

15. Create a **mentorship program for youth and/or young adults** ages 14-25 to prepare them for adulthood by encouraging career exploration, team building, and goal setting.

16. Ensure new **public potable water supply infrastructure** is designed to withstand groundwater impacts and risks, such as saltwater intrusion.

17. Continue support of **Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD)** and City of Norfolk improvements to the wastewater and stormwater systems.

18. Monitor revenue streams and identify opportunities for **new sources of funding** to support needed public facilities and services.

Celebrating Our Community: Putting Actions in Place

To truly celebrate our community, Norfolk must do more than preserve - we must elevate. That means marking neighborhood gateways with pride, illuminating untold stories through public art and historic recognition, and creating spaces where culture, commerce, and daily life thrive side by side. From safe, vibrant nightlife to live-work spaces that keep creativity rooted in place, every investment in neighborhood identity is an investment in the city's shared future.

Now is the moment to expand the canvas—ensuring that every resident, every street, and every story is part of what defines Norfolk, and part of what moves us forward.



(City of Norfolk)

Where in the city could these ideas go?

Promote **mixed-use development** with active ground floors, community amenities and pedestrian friendly streets **2.1**

Encourage **community gardens** and urban agriculture to meet the need for equitable fresh food access **2.5**

Build on existing **cultural arts districts** to provide local artists affordable studio, live/work and exhibit spaces **3.5**

Advocate for **Norfolk's nightlife** and entertainment industry to be vibrant and safe **3.6**

Expand and connect historic trails **1.7**

Leverage Norfolk's Downtown waterfront as a **gateway for tourism** by connecting cruise visitors to tourist attractions **1.18**

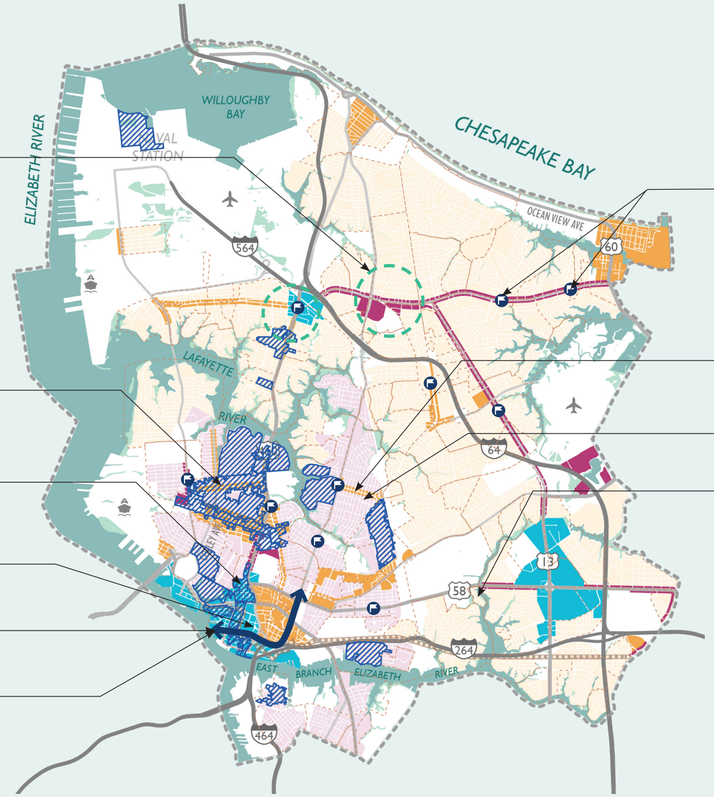


Figure 4: Celebrating our Community: Putting Actions in Place

Where and how to enact our Plan Actions has yet to be determined, but here are some ideas of prototypical places in the city they could be sited.

Source: City of Norfolk, WRT

1.1 Highlight city neighborhoods by incorporating **neighborhood specific wayfinding and branding**

1.11 Create **Cultural Corridors** where streets/ districts are themed around the history/ identity of the neighborhood

4.9 Incorporate **community amenities** in new fire and police stations

1.5 Designate **new historic neighborhoods and landmarks** in marginalized areas

OVERLAYS

- State/ National Historic Districts
- Civic Leagues
- Potential gateway locations

PLACETYPES

- Community Mixed-Use
- Corridor Mixed-Use
- Regional Activity Center
- Sustain - Suburban
- Sustain - Traditional

Growing Equitably

Housing is top of mind for Norfolk residents. Rising housing costs felt across the income spectrum are compounded by climate risk, a shifting labor market, changing demographics, and broader economic uncertainty. These pressures are not unique to Norfolk, but their impacts are deeply local. As the city looks ahead, its path to equitable growth lies in leveraging the strength of its neighborhoods, the resilience of its people, and its position as a regional anchor for both industry and innovation.

Meeting this moment requires Norfolk to invest in growth that is inclusive, adaptive, and grounded in community. That means increasing housing production across income levels, preserving affordability in long-standing neighborhoods, and creating flexible housing options that reflect the needs of a diverse and often transient population. It also means supporting residents at every stage of life—military families building roots, new generations seeking opportunity, and long-time neighbors who deserve to remain and thrive.

To sustain this growth, Norfolk must strengthen its economic foundations, by cultivating emerging industries and expanding its local business ecosystem. Strengthening education-to-employment pipelines, supporting entrepreneurs, and connecting residents to meaningful, good-paying jobs will be essential to ensuring prosperity is broadly shared.

Equitable growth is more than a policy goal—it is a lasting commitment to people and place. It requires sustained investment in neighborhoods, in grassroots leadership, and in the social infrastructure that empowers communities to lead their own transformation. With intentional action and community vision, Norfolk can grow in strength, connection and lasting opportunity for its residents.

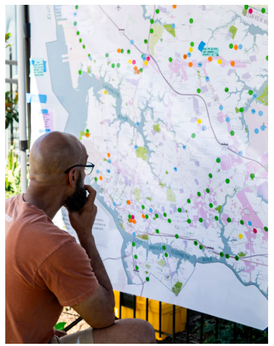


(WRT)

> **"The City's zoning, largely written in the 1950s to favor single-family housing, must move away from exclusionary practices. We need to allow multifamily housing wherever possible, as rising sea levels will leave less land to build on. The City will look very different 100 years from now, but we still have the opportunity to guide its growth in the right way — and the City must grow.**
>
> — Norfolk resident, Phase 1 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

What We Heard:

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 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)

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





Goals:

GOAL 1:
Support a Housing Market that Meets the Needs of All Residents

GOAL 2:
Increase Housing Production and Adapt Housing Options for a Changing Population

GOAL 3:
Grow And Diversify Norfolk's Economy

GOAL 4:
Support Local Workforce Development and Build Strategic Pipelines

Big Ideas:

- **Deconcentrate poverty** and facilitate mobility to high opportunity neighborhoods.
- Preserve and **improve existing affordable housing.**
- Create new **affordable rental housing** and homeownership opportunities to address increasing affordability challenges faced by Norfolk's residents.
- Establish a **dedicated source to finance** affordable housing, preserve existing homes, support rental assistance, and invest in neighborhood improvements.
- Forge partnerships with faith-based institutions and universities to **enable enduring affordable housing through partnerships with community land trusts (CLTs),** especially in formerly redlined neighborhoods.
- Support Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) to lead neighborhood revitalization efforts and **build a community-led development ecosystem.**
- Implement affordable and **long-term homeownership programs tailored for public service professionals** and vulnerable populations, including the unhoused, elderly, disabled and low-income households.
- Position Norfolk as a **one-stop hub for defense and maritime industries** by attracting companies in related sectors such as shipbuilding, cybersecurity, and defense technology.
- Promote **clean, green redevelopment** and resilience investments on working waterfronts.
- Work with educational institutions and vocational schools, to provide **job training, job access, and research programs** that meet the needs of qualifications to enter the workforce in growing industries within the city.

GOAL 1:

Support a Housing Market that Meets the Needs of All Residents

Plan for partnerships, programs, and funding to support a housing market that sustainably and equitably meets the housing needs of all community members in Norfolk. Protect and maintain affordability in existing and new housing stock to reduce the financial burden on Norfolk's households and keep current and future residents rooted in their community.

A healthy housing market is made up of market, public, and nonprofit actors that work together to meet the needs of all households at all income levels. In addition to producing a wide range of new housing, Norfolk's existing housing needs equal attention to make sure residents can continue to live affordably and safely in their homes. Resources and programs can help bridge the affordability gap, mitigate evictions, adapt to rising waters, and otherwise meet existing residents where they are, to make sure that all who call the city home can stay rooted in their own communities. Achieving this goal can be supported by the implementation of the *Norfolk Comprehensive Housing Study and Strategic Plan.*

> *The Norfolk Comprehensive Housing Study and Strategic Plan identified current market trends and housing needs in Norfolk, assessed existing capacity and proposed a series of goals to address those needs in a comprehensive way.*

1. Deconcentrate poverty and facilitate mobility to areas of opportunity to help Norfolk households access quality housing in high opportunity neighborhoods across the region and promote economic opportunity for Norfolk's low-income residents.

a. Continue redevelopment of obsolete public housing (e.g., St. Paul's Transformation) and develop a coordinated, long-term strategy to address these communities.

b. Continue to identify necessary infrastructure for redevelopment of the St. Paul's area and determine funding needs.

c. Continue and expand the landlord incentive program to facilitate use of vouchers in areas of opportunity and emphasize and market a campaign to increase large household landlord participation in Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) programs.

d. Identify neighborhoods of opportunity throughout the region.

e. Create a user friendly, real time, searchable database of affordable housing options that includes other useful information, including proximity to transit, healthcare, grocery stores, and schools.

f. Create a housing resources guide that can be provided in libraries, recreation centers, places of worship, the Foodbank, and more.

g. Publicly praise or otherwise recognize financial institutions with a record of supporting fair housing initiatives.

h. Fund and charge experienced local organizations to provide fair housing education, testing, and investigation as well as periodic review and analysis of lending data.

i. Promote HUD Property Appraisal and Valuation Equity (PAVE) training to home appraisers in Hampton Roads.

j. Support tenants with vouchers to find homes in areas of opportunity and thrive once they move there by working with a strong nonprofit who can augment capacity and act as an intermediary between the voucher program and landlords.

k. Continue landlord outreach and engagement efforts, as well as housing counseling services through People First and other non-profit partners.

2. Preserve existing affordable housing and strengthen neighborhoods to maintain and improve the existing housing stock, promote housing quality, and ensure long-term affordability for existing renters and homeowners while strengthening neighborhood housing markets.

a. Mitigate opportunities for for-profit LLCs to acquire multi-unit properties at the end of their affordability period (change loan documents).

b. Explore a Right of First Refusal policy.

c. Commission a preservation inventory to gather information about multifamily rental properties that can be used to identify and prevent the loss of properties at risk of becoming blighted.

d. Partner with the non-profit and faith community to increase options for property rehab.

e. Continue targeted owner-occupied and rental repair programs (e.g., Renovate Norfolk and Strengthening Neighborhoods) and evaluate opportunities to enhance these programs, such as pursuing partnerships with non-profits.

f. Create a rehab program open to landlord or owner-occupied applicants that provides tax incentives and/or subsidies to upgrade homes in exchange for a covenant that guarantees affordability for a minimum of 5 years.

g. Revise CDBG and HOME funding to focus on strengthening neighborhoods and deconcentrating poverty.

h. Strengthen neighborhoods by giving existing housing programs a strategic geographic focus and introducing new programs to increase the impact.

i. Support efforts by the Department of Neighborhood Services to prevent evictions through the Eviction Prevention Center, providing financial assistance and other resources to eligible Norfolk renters who are facing evictions due to unforeseen hardships.

3. Create new affordable rental housing and homeownership opportunities to address increasing affordability challenges faced by Norfolk's residents.

a. Support mixed-income development in areas of opportunity through the implementation of the recommendations of the Mayor's Housing Commission.

b. Continue and enhance existing public land disposition processes, such as the disposition of vacant City-owned residential property (auction process).



Bruce's Park neighborhood (WRT)

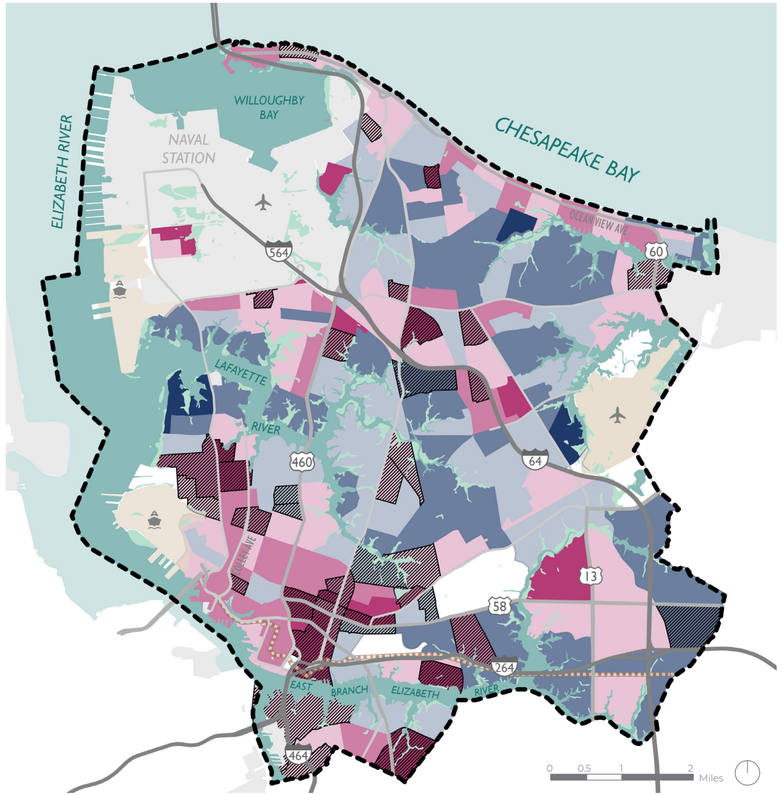


Figure 5: Occupied housing units: owners and renters

Source: City of Norfolk; US Census ACS 5-Year estimates, 2022; HUD

c. Work with NRHA to refine the Project Based Vouchers (PBV) award process to encourage projects that deconcentrate poverty.

d. Create and implement a public education campaign on the benefits, best practices, and positive outcomes of affordable and mixed income housing.

e. Modify performance-based grant regulations to allow affordable housing developments.

f. Provide subsidies for the development of city-owned vacant residential property for multifamily development in neighborhoods of opportunity (Establish underwriting criteria and add capacity).

g. Use HUD Entitlement funding to help local nonprofits providing tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA), financial and housing counseling, and homebuyer assistance.

h. Increase awareness and utilization of NRHA's HomeNet Ownership Center, which provides credit counseling, down-payment and closing cost assistance and other tools to increase homeownership.

i. Support the Rent Ready Norfolk program, which educates landlords, property managers, and renters about their rights and responsibilities and informs and educates about the misconceptions of renters.

4. Build regional capacity and coordination around affordable housing and access to opportunity to ensure that the City and its partners are able to execute housing policies and programs with efficiency, scale, and significant impact.

a. Collaborate with philanthropic, public and corporate entities to provide sustained funding for regional nonprofit capacity.

b. Continue to work with regional partners to collectively address regional affordable housing needs.

c. Support the development of a regional housing plan by the HRPDC, including implementation strategies, to ensure an adequate supply of quality and affordable housing.

d. Develop additional technical assistance to small developers about developing small properties and SWaM businesses for assistance with certifications.

e. Create informational open houses for contractors and builders, with support from partners like the Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development and Coastal Virginia Building Industry Association.

f. Leverage Norfolk's regional leadership to encourage regional partners to participate in attainable housing efforts, such as ***Single Room Occupancies (SROs), Permanent Supportive Housing, and Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) programs***, including building them in their cities and accepting residents from all cities in the region.

- ***Single Room Occupancies (SROs):*** *is a residential property that includes multiple single room dwelling units. Each unit is for occupancy by a single eligible individual. The unit need not, but may, contain food preparation or sanitary facilities, or both.*
- ***Permanent Supportive Housing:*** *is housing in which housing assistance (e.g., long-term leasing or rental assistance) and supportive services are provided to assist households with at least one member (adult or child) with a disability in achieving housing stability.*
- ***Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Programs:*** *is a Housing First-informed intervention implemented by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) program that rapidly connects individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing with short-term financial assistance and targeted support services. Its goal is to reduce the time spent homeless, prevent returns to homelessness, and promote long-term housing stability.*

5. Secure **dedicated, ongoing, and flexible funding** for housing to meet Norfolk's funding needs for existing programs and to unlock funding from private and mission-motivated partners for long-term implementation of the Strategic Plan.



The Center, a 100-bed emergency shelter operated by Norfolk Community Services Board (City of Norfolk)

a. Establish a dedicated source of local funding and financing to build capacity to meet housing needs, such as scaling local programs, gap financing, creating new affordable and attainable housing, supporting mixed-income developments, improving current housing stock, acquiring at-risk properties, and supporting rental assistance initiatives and neighborhood improvements.

b. Establish eligible activities, focusing on assistance that covers gaps and also allows the City/partners to leverage significant state or federal funding.

c. Encourage more lending institutions to include FHA loans and other affordable products in their portfolio and market more aggressively.

d. Encourage lenders to reinvest in areas with majority-minority populations

6. Forge partnerships with faith-based institutions, universities, and other community partners to foster an ecosystem that enables enduring affordable housing through partnerships with ***community land trusts (CLTs)***, especially in formerly redlined neighborhoods.

Community Land Trusts (CLTs): are non-profit, community-based organizations whose mission is to provide affordable housing in perpetuity by owning land and leasing it to those who live in houses built on that land.

BEST PRACTICES:

CHAMPLAIN HOUSING TRUST, BURLINGTON, VT

One of the largest CLTs in the country, Champlain Housing Trust has developed and preserved hundreds of affordable homes. By purchasing land and holding it in trust, they sell homes to low- and moderate-income families at affordable prices, ensuring long-term affordability even as property values rise. Homeowners can build equity, but when they sell, the home must remain affordable to future buyers.

7. Incubate and support ***Community Development Corporations (CDCs)*** and Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) to lead neighborhood revitalization efforts and partner with local philanthropies to fund an emerging community-led ecosystem.

Community Development Corporations (CDCs): are non-profit organizations that center neighborhood-based revitalization. CDC activities include developing affordable housing to attract homeowners back into their neighborhoods, initiating economic development, and developing social services.

BEST PRACTICES:

CLEVELAND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, CLEVELAND, OH

The Cleveland Foundation (1914) is a community foundation providing targeted grantmaking and collaborative initiatives. It partners with local organizations, institutions, and CDCs to support programs like rental assistance and eviction prevention services, education and economic empowerment, and other impactful community-driven initiatives.

LOCAL SUCCESS:

ST. PAUL'S TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

The St. Paul's Area Transformation Project is a strategic partnership between the City of Norfolk and the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, seeking to redevelop a flood-prone, public housing community adjacent to downtown Norfolk into a mixed-use, mixed-income, opportunity-filled Norfolk community of the future. Part of the project involves the People First team, which works with the City and the NRHA as well as partnering organizations, developers, property managers, community members and other stakeholders to build comprehensive plans around neighborhood conditions and human-service needs.

8. Implement affordable and **long-term homeownership programs tailored for public service professionals** such as firefighters, teachers, police officers, nurses, military service members, and city workers, as well as more vulnerable populations (e.g., unhoused, elderly, disabled, income limited, etc.).

BEST PRACTICES:

TEACHER'S VILLAGE, NEWARK, NJ

A mixed-use development providing 205 residential units specifically for teachers, educators and school staff. Beyond housing, it fosters a strong sense of community through commercial spaces for local businesses, three charter schools that allow teachers to live and work in the area, and early childcare learning center to offer support to teachers with younger children.



Rendering of Teachers' Village, Newark, NJ (RBH Group / Richard Meier & Partners)

GOAL 2:

Increase Housing Production and Adapt Housing Options for a Changing Population

Expand the development of new housing units across all income bands to meet growing demand and ensure accessibility to Norfolk residents. Develop flexible and adaptable housing solutions that meet the needs of a transient population, cater to Norfolk's seasonal economy, and prepare for future demographic shifts.

Housing is top of mind for Norfolk residents of all backgrounds. While building new affordable housing is paramount, housing developers and partners should construct a wide range of housing types for households across the full range of incomes, lifestyles, and family needs, building up a diverse supply to meet growing demand. To meet the needs of the present and future, we must embrace thoughtful infill, higher-density transit-oriented development, expanded affordable housing, and innovative partnerships.

1. Increase housing production for residents across all income levels using a combination of regulatory and non-regulatory efforts.

a. Continue to implement innovate zoning strategies to encourage and incentivize more flexible housing types, such as those incorporated into the Huntersville Neighborhood Resilience Overlay, the Broad Creek Refresh Overlay and the Norfolk and Western Historic Overlay.

b. Consider reducing or eliminating minimum lot sizes.

c. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to permit manufactured housing in more zoning districts, recognizing it as a source of affordable housing, and encourage new manufactured home communities in resilient, amenity-rich, and walkable neighborhoods.

d. Identify underutilized and vacant parcels that can be transformed into mixed use and mixed income neighborhoods with a range of amenities, diverse housing options, and areas easily accessible by the city's robust transit network, focusing on areas within the Community Mixed-Use, Corridor Mixed-Use, and Regional Activity Center Place Types.

BEST PRACTICES:

INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES IN TRANSIT-ORIENTED COMMUNITIES, CO

Colorado's HB24-1313 enhances transit-oriented communities (TOCs) by implementing zoning reforms for high-density, mixed-use developments, improving public transportation facilities, and ensuring affordable housing is included in new projects. If communities are approved as a TOC that meets housing opportunity goals, they are eligible for an infrastructure fund.

2. Explore options for **gentle density** where appropriate via ***accessory dwelling units (ADUs)*** and Missing Middle Housing.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU): is a smaller, independent residential dwelling unit with kitchen, sleeping and bathroom facilities, that is added to, created within, or detached from a primary one-unit single-family dwelling.

a. Modify the Zoning Ordinance to provide more by-right options for ADUs, especially in residential districts where they are only allowed by CUP, and loosen development and performance standards.

b. Using the guidance from the Future Land Use Plan and Place Types, explore zoning changes to accommodate more Missing Middle Housing (e.g. allow by-right or by CUP in more zoning districts, create a new definition to distinguish from higher density multi-family uses, etc.).

LOCAL SUCCESS:

ARLINGTON DENSITY POLICIES, ARLINGTON, VA

In March 2023, Arlington, Virginia passed a significant zoning reform allowing up to six units (duplexes, townhouses, or multiplexes) to be built on lots previously limited to single-family homes. This policy, part of the "Missing Middle" Housing initiative, aims to increase housing density and affordability by permitting these multi-unit structures in designated neighborhoods.



ADU by Backyard Homes in North Arlington (Jay Westcott)

c. Implement flexible zoning standards, such as reduced parking requirements, increased size allowances, height restrictions and owner-occupancy requirements, for ADUs and Missing Middle Housing.

3. Explore reducing or eliminating **minimum off-street parking requirements** to devote more development space to housing, promote housing attainability, reduce impervious cover for better stormwater infiltration, and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

4. Pursue missing middle housing demonstration projects to test the concepts in the Missing Middle Pattern Book, and prioritize when pursuing grant opportunities.

5. Pursue educational efforts, such as an online and printed housing guide, to explain what can already be done in the city (e.g., zoning allowances and housing programs) to support affordable and attainable housing development.

6. Review the viability of inclusionary housing policies in the City of Norfolk.



Paseo Verde Transit-Oriented Development, Philadelphia, PA (WRT)

7. Encourage and incentivize new housing, including low-income **affordable housing, to be located near public transit** to promote accessibility and to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

8. Utilize zoning and the Future Land Use Plan to **support additional housing opportunities on higher ground** and areas of low risk.

9. Consider integrating universal design principles into new and existing housing to create accessible, adaptable living spaces that **accommodate residents of all ages and abilities**, enabling them to age in place.

10. Continue to support the efforts of the Norfolk Community Services Board to **provide services to unhoused populations**, including food, clinical and case management, and shelter resources (e.g., The Center).

11. Consider policies to enhance services to the unhoused through additional assisted housing units or programs.

12. Consider zoning amendments that would support and **accommodate more flexible forms of housing**, such as coliving, cohousing, and homesharing arrangements, to support multigenerational housing needs and opportunities.

GOAL 3:

Grow And Diversify Norfolk's Economy

Support existing industries, while innovating and attracting emerging sectors, markets, and audiences, to build diversity and resilience into Norfolk's economy. Create and foster an equitable economic development environment, support Norfolk's emerging entrepreneurs, and grow a community of small and medium-sized businesses.

Norfolk is already a leader in many industries, yet there is always room to grow. Our strong foundations in defense, maritime, health, manufacturing, and other key sectors lay the groundwork to grow and diversify, meeting emerging regional, state, and national opportunities. The City should also make sure to promote our creative, innovative, and highly connected community and our high quality of life when attracting new industries and businesses.

Entrepreneurs and small businesses are the backbone of Norfolk's communities, providing opportunity for newcomers and diverse stakeholders to create a brighter future for themselves and their families. Targeted programs, resources, and outreach can help ensure that small businesses are supported in every neighborhood in the city, are inclusive of residents of all ages and backgrounds, and are truly equitable and accessible for all.

1. Conduct a **buildable lands analysis** to determine Norfolk's physical capacity to meet current and projected future economic needs.

2. Develop a **list of land ready to be developed and appropriate options for development** or redevelopment that are suitable for new industrial and manufacturing sectors, as well as access, trends, etc. needed for them to be successful.

3. Evaluate how existing **economic development tools** (e.g., Opportunity Zones, Enterprise Zones, Tourism Zones, Technology Zones, etc.) align with the Future Land Use Plan and adjust those tools and/or create new ones to drive economic development.

4. Continue efforts to **analyze Norfolk's existing economy; its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats**; and how the city can capitalize on its assets to proactively create a more diverse, resilient economy, to better withstand and adapt to future shocks.

BEST PRACTICES:

ECONOMIC RESILIENCY PLAN, MADELIA, MN

Madelia's Economic Resiliency Plan was developed with the primary goal of diversifying the economy beyond its current reliance on manufacturing, health care, and retail. It includes a focus on economic disturbances that result from natural or human-caused disasters, spurred by a fire that impacted nearly 20% of the city's service sector jobs.

5. Develop and maintain **robust relationships** with companies in the City's current targeted business sectors, as well as new sectors identified by the Department of Economic Development.

a. Evaluate offering new tax incentives or property tax deductions or exemptions for businesses that choose to invest in Norfolk (e.g., businesses that partner with defense institutions via a local defense production zone).

6. Facilitate the **attraction and growth of new target industries**, as identified by the Department of Economic Development and aligned with regional and state economic development targets, particularly those that provide living, or family-supported wages and on-the-job training.

a. Pursue land use regulations that support businesses/industry expansion or relocation, especially within the Norfolk Innovation Corridor and Downtown Norfolk, as well as areas within the Innovation and Production, Regional Activity Center, and Corridor Mixed-Use Place Types, in tandem with the provisions and targets of existing location-based incentive programs (e.g., Technology Zones, Opportunity Zones, Enterprise Zones, Historically Underutilized Business [HUB] Zones, and Tourism Zones).

b. Dedicate resources to guide and provide support to new industries on relocation application processes, available development areas that are suitable for the intended use and creating synergies with already existing industry leaders.

7. Empower and grow capacity and resources of the Economic Development Department to lead special projects that will impact the economic vitality of the city.

8. Participate in and **support efforts by regional entities**, such as the Hampton Roads Alliance, to share information, challenges, and opportunities, and create regional strategies for the creation and retention of jobs and businesses.

9. Position Norfolk as a **one-stop hub for defense and maritime industries** by building a business ecosystem that attracts companies in related sectors such as shipbuilding, cybersecurity, and defense technology.

a. Engage defense and associated industry clusters to understand future projections and develop sub-sectors or emerging business types that could be compatible with Norfolk's economic landscape.

b. Seek opportunities to concentrate or co-locate innovation and defense-focused businesses, attracting companies seeking proximity to defense assets for collaboration on technology and defense projects.

BEST PRACTICES:

CUMMINGS RESEARCH PARK, HUNTSVILLE, AL

Huntsville capitalized on the presence of Redstone Arsenal—a U.S. Army post, home to several military organizations, including the Army Materiel Command and NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center—to develop the Cummings Research Park, now a thriving hub for defense and aerospace contractors, that has led to a significant expansion in the city's high-tech sector.



Cummings Research Park, Huntsville AL

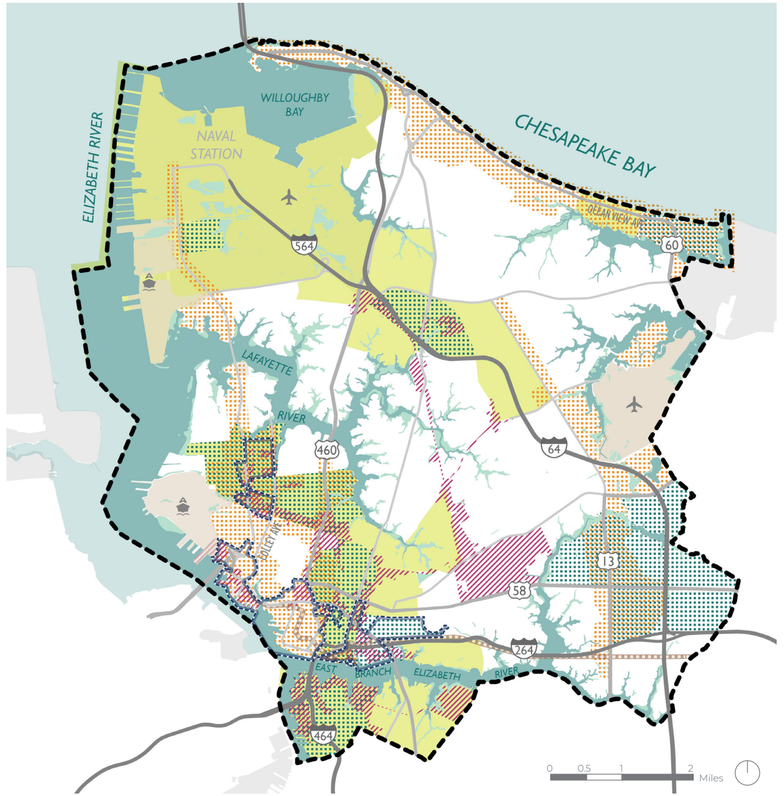


Figure 6: Economic Zones

City of Norfolk

- Technology Zones
- Enterprise Zones
- Opportunity Zones
- Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zones
- Tourism Zones
- City limits
- Military
- Seaport/Airport
- Light rail
- Water
- Wetlands

10. Align City of Norfolk infrastructure investments with Port Authority and other stakeholder plans to promote **clean and green redevelopment and resilience investments** on working waterfronts.

11. Create an inventory of **"opportunity sites" that includes vacant, underutilized, and environmentally sensitive properties** (e.g., ***brownfields***) and support the redevelopment of these sites to enhance the quality-of-life of the surrounding community, with an emphasis on areas that have experienced historical redlining.

A brownfield is a property in which the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of may be complicated by the presence, or potential presence, of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Common examples of brownfields include former gas stations, auto repair shops, dry cleaners, industrial facilities, warehouses, vacant lots.

LOCAL SUCCESS:

NORFOLK THRIVE EPA BROWNFIELDS AREA-WIDE PLAN

The City of Norfolk was awarded a Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grant through the US Environmental Protection Agency to advance initiatives that integrate resilience, transportation, and economic development elements to create a comprehensive urban redevelopment strategy for the Harbor Park area.

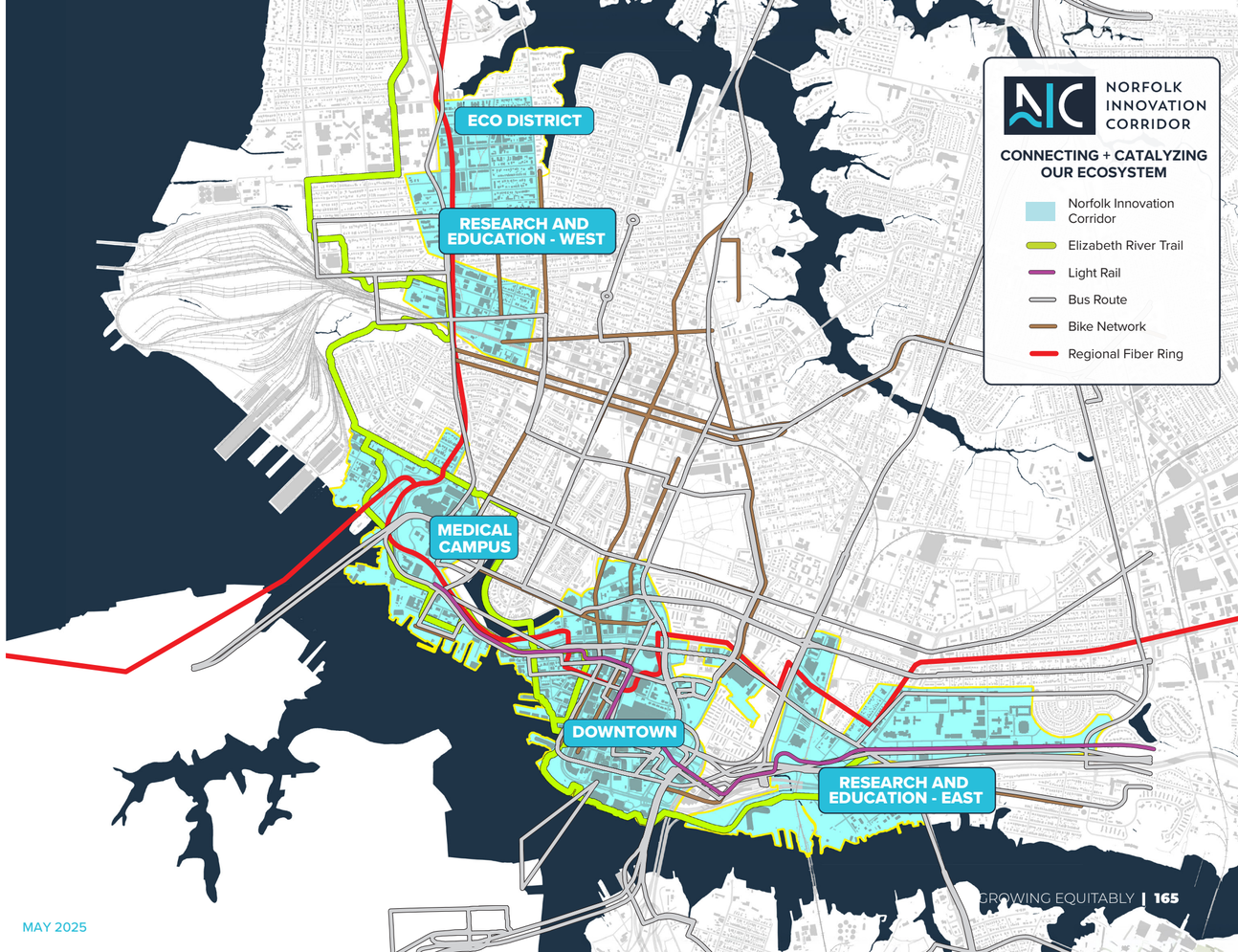
12. Support grassroots and external efforts to build **district identities** around local industries and explore financial incentives to attract, retain, and expand these industries.

LOCAL SUCCESS:

NORFOLK INNOVATION CORRIDOR (NIC)

The Norfolk Innovation Corridor (NIC) is an area of Norfolk designated as a "technology zone", enabling qualifying startup firms and firm expansions to receive certain tax incentives.

Most importantly, the businesses in this zone benefit from densely clustered physical, networking, and economic assets and has strong marketing identity that has been outreached to the public, establishing their own identity they are known for.



MAY 2025

13. Find ways to identify, promote, and support spaces for **incubator opportunities, start-ups, and non-brick and mortar food and commerce industries** conducive for small businesses to start and grow.

LOCAL SUCCESS:

SELDEN MARKET

Selden Market is a collaborative space designed to foster new street-level business ideas in Downtown Norfolk. The market provides a low-risk environment with short-term leases, a supportive development program, and a community atmosphere that fosters learning and growth.



Selden Market, Norfolk, VA (City of Norfolk)

14. Evaluate regulatory and use barriers for **home-based businesses** and consider changes to allow for more flexibility and allowances, especially for creative production or artisanal production.

15. Actively engage and support businesses, especially small, women-owned, and minority businesses and through advocacy groups, by providing **technical assistance** and informing them of **resources available** from the City and other partners for starting, marketing, and growing businesses, using innovative advertisement and outreach. Support and maintain existing programs and staffing resources (e.g., Business Navigator/concierge program and Biz Café and seminar programs).

16. Support **Business Retention and Expansion (BRE)** programs that assist existing, growing companies (especially those in traded sectors) to drive new capital investment into Norfolk.

BEST PRACTICES:

PITTSBURGH EMPLOYMENT, ADVANCEMENT AND RETENTION NETWORK (EARN), PITTSBURGH, PA

Pittsburgh runs several retention programs such as Employment, Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) that are aimed at supporting the development of new businesses in the Downtown, providing employment and training services to low-moderate income workers, retail and office retention, and recruitment efforts.

17. Focus existing workforce development resources on **underserved and high-unemployment communities,** using the ***Norfolk Works*** program as a model.

> *Norfolk Works: is the workforce development arm of the Norfolk Department of Economic Development, focused on connecting residents to in-demand jobs and supporting business attraction, retention, and growth. It offers resources and training for job seekers, while providing recruitment and hiring assistance to local businesses through partnerships.*

18. Develop a suite of services to **support and upscale "disruptor" business models** as a means of expanding opportunities for entrepreneurs and business owners, in partnership with outside agencies such as the NSU Innovation Center, ODU, and 757 Collab.

19. Explore the creation of a **Legacy Business Registe**r, which would honor local businesses that have been operating in Norfolk for 50 years or more and explore local mechanisms or programs for financial and/or infrastructure assistance for businesses on the register.

20. Continue to implement equitable economic development strategies to **expand inclusivity and opportunity** throughout the City's procurement and contract processes.

21. Support efforts to provide **affordable childcare** in the city, to help foster diverse and equitable participation in the local economy.

Embody, Norfolk innovation Corridor (City of Norfolk)

GOAL 4:

Support Local Workforce Development and Build Strategic Pipelines

Partner with Norfolk's anchor institutions to build local employment pipelines, connecting current and prospective Norfolk residents with well-paying jobs within the city.

Norfolk's workforce is shaped by the talent, resilience, and diversity of its residents. Norfolk is fortunate to have key educational and business anchors that can collaboratively create a more seamless pipeline, from school to training to emerging innovative sectors. Sustainable partnerships, incentives for hiring locally, and resources for traditional and non-traditional career paths should all be supported. Those partners may in turn need adjustments in infrastructure or land uses to accommodate their own growth trajectories, helping to create a prosperous future for all.

1. Develop a **"cradle-to-career" model** for Norfolk to support the development of lifelong learning and continued educational opportunities leading to in-demand careers.

2. Work with Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, and Tidewater Community College, vocational schools, and similar educational institutions to provide **job training, job access, and research programs** that meet the qualifications to enter the workforce in growing industries within the city.



Norfolk State University (WRT)

3. Foster **workforce development initiatives** with local employers to better connect current and prospective Norfolk residents with well-paying jobs within the city.

a. Invest in expanding and establishing new retraining programs that focus on workforce development for the high-paying industries and fastest growing sectors within the city, in collaboration with educational, vocational, and industry partners.

CASE STUDY:

"SECTOR-SPECIFIC" RE-TRAINING INVESTMENT, SEATTLE, WA

Seattle Colleges work closely with industries to develop and maintain programs to prepare graduates for the job market. Many of these professional/technical programs qualify for worker retraining to provide opportunities for laid off, unemployed, and dislocated workers, with a focus on rapid re-employment.

b. Support and promote efforts by non-profits, NGOs, and other agencies to develop and implement workforce development programs for special needs populations and partner with these organizations to review the City's hiring policies related to these populations.

4. Explore opportunities to incentivize **local hiring for small- and medium-sized businesses**, with special focus on residents living in underrepresented areas of the city.

5. Promote and support NRHA's **youth and business enterprise programs** to advance economic development for low-income communities.

6. Work with Norfolk Public Schools to build **awareness and interest for youth in growing and targeted industries** in Norfolk. Use this partnership to train and provide fundamental skills and training efforts in the classroom (e.g., City staff seminars, discussions, or presentations to students).

7. Support the **development and expansion of anchor institutions** in the city, balancing growth with land availability and conservation, and work collaboratively with these institutions to ensure that their master plans are presented to the Planning Commission for review and information.

8. Explore "satellite" locations for anchor educational partners co-located for **workforce training opportunities**, in partnership with existing City programs such as Norfolk Works.

9. Seek to identify service members who are separating from the defense industry and who may be candidates for employment with local businesses; encourage them, their spouses and dependents to **remain in Norfolk** after their service commitment terminates.

10. Build relationships with employers, identify real-time and projected workforce needs, and connect businesses with Norfolk's education and training partners.



Assembly Workspace campus Downtown Norfolk (Assembly)

Growing Equitably: Putting Actions in Place

Norfolk's high-ground neighborhoods, least prone to flooding and climate risks, offer a critical opportunity to grow in ways that are both climate-smart and equity-driven. These areas can anchor new housing, vibrant commercial corridors, and resilient infrastructure that supports both people and place. To realize this potential, Norfolk must double down on transit-oriented and mixed-use development, promote missing middle housing, support entrepreneurs and small businesses, and invest in historically underserved neighborhoods. Projects like St. Paul's Transformation show what's possible when our city invests boldly and equitably in our future.

Now is the time to build on that momentum. Norfolk can position its high ground as an engine for inclusive growth, where homes are attainable, businesses can thrive, and every resident has a stake in the city's future.



St. Paul's Transformation Project

Where in the city could these ideas go? ?

Identify and support spaces for incubators, start-ups, and **non-brick and mortar food and commerce industries** **3.13**

Facilitate **attraction and growth of new target industries,** particularly those that provide living, or family supported wages and on-the-job training **3.6**

Support **redevelopment of "opportunity sites"** such as vacant, underutilized or brownfields. **3.11**

Create **new affordable homeownership and rental** opportunities for low income residents. **1.3**

Promote **clean and green redevelopment and resilience investments** on working waterfronts **3.10**

Enable enduring affordable housing through **Community Land Trusts** in formerly redlined neighborhoods **1.6**

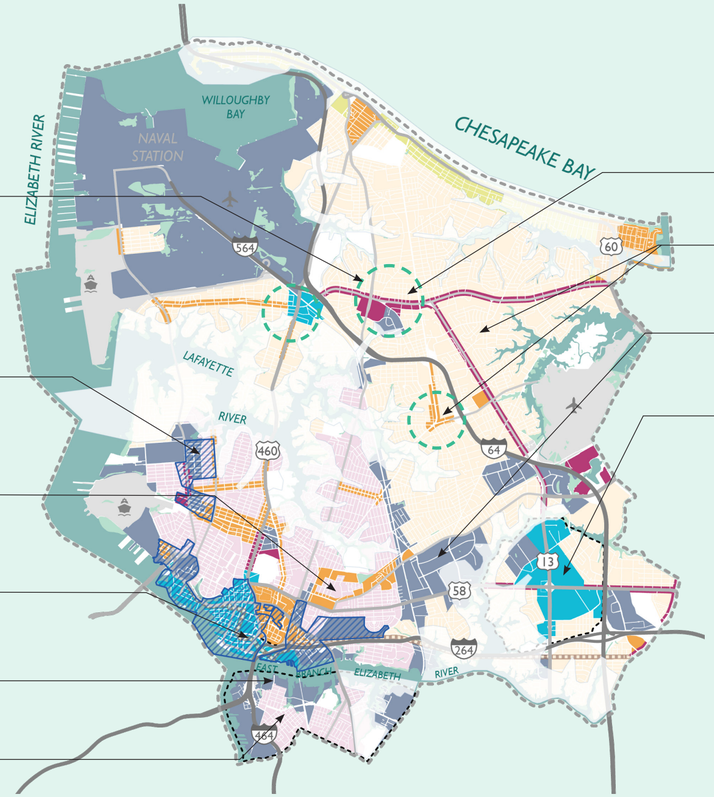


Figure 7: Growing Equitably: Putting Actions in Place

Where and how to enact our Plan Actions has yet to be determined, but here are some ideas of prototypical places in the city they could be sited. Source: City of Norfolk

4.8 **Explore "satellite" locations** for anchor educational partners co-located for workforce training opportunities.

2.2 Explore options for gentle density **via accessory dwelling units (ADU's)** and **Missing Middle Housing**

3.9 Position Norfolk as a **one-stop hub for defense and maritime** industries to attract industries in shipbuilding, cybersecurity and related sectors.

2.1 Transform underutilized and vacant parcels into **mixed use mixed income neighborhoods with transit access, amenities and diverse housing types**

OVERLAYS

- Vision 2100 - Yellow Zone
- Norfolk Innovation Corridor

PLACE TYPES

- Community Mixed-Use
- Corridor Mixed-Use
- Innovation and Production
- Regional Activity Center
- Sustain - Coastal
- Sustain - Suburban
- Sustain - Traditional
- Transportation and Logistics
- Planning Focus Areas

Embracing Nature

Norfolk is defined by its relationship to water—bordered by rivers, wetlands, and coastline that offer residents daily access to nature. But our rivers, shorelines and wetlands also pose our city's greatest risk. As sea levels rise, Norfolk must lean into the wisdom of its landscape, adapting with nature rather than against it. To truly embrace nature, we must build resilience in a way that restores our ecosystems and strengthens our communities.

Norfolk's natural systems are powerful tools in managing risk. By leveraging its natural assets, protecting habitat corridors, bridging fragmented green spaces, and restoring shorelines, the city has a unique opportunity to create a continuous network of blue and green infrastructure that both absorbs stormwater and connects people to nature. These ecological investments can double as community assets: parks that can soak up floodwaters like a sponge, trails that follow resilient waterfronts, and tree canopies that cool neighborhoods and improve health.

But resilience also starts small. Households and neighborhoods can play a transformative role, whether through rain gardens, retrofitted roofs, or community-led greening efforts. Schools and community centers play a pivotal role in supporting both emergency response and everyday well-being. Increasing access to the water, particularly in communities long excluded from its edges, ensures that the work of adaptation also becomes a force for equity.

Norfolk's future depends not only on its ability to reduce risk, but on its willingness to reimagine what kind of city it can become: a city that protects those who are most vulnerable, restores what has been lost, and invites everyone to participate in shaping a more natural, livable, and enduring place.



(WRT)

> **"If nothing gets done, we are going to see more flooding, susceptibility to storm surges like Katrina, and hurricanes. I don't want the city that I love to not be here in another 75 years or so. We, the city and us together, need to do as much as we can to save it."**
>
> — Norfolk resident, Phase 1 Engagement

Embracing Nature
COMMUNITY VISION



(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

What We Heard:

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

By 2050, they hope to see their thriving community 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 and 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.

> **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



(WRT)

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.**



Embracing Nature



Goals:

GOAL 1:
Preserve and Enhance Natural Systems

GOAL 2:
Build and Maintain a Network of Green and Blue Infrastructure

GOAL 3:
Protect and Adapt Communities from Flooding and Other Risks

GOAL 4:
Integrate Resilience and Sustainability in Capital and Infrastructure Planning

GOAL 5:
Support a Comprehensive and Coordinated Approach to Building Resilience

Big Ideas!

- **Implement wetland design changes** that allow for the landward migration of wetlands, for resilience to sea level rise.
- Pursue opportunities to **daylight (re-surface) creeks** that have been buried to expand channel capacity and provide natural amenities for communities.
- Support continued **public access** along shorelines and waterfronts.
- Develop **coastal infrastructure as a waterfront amenity**, including blue parks, living shorelines, and waterfront trails.
- Develop **natural blue and green corridors**, such as a blue belts network of nature-based infrastructure in areas subject to chronic floods, prioritizing native plants, habitat corridors, and wetland restoration and enhance biodiversity.
- Locate new **“spongy” parks** in flood-prone areas so recreation spaces can provide additional storage for runoff, mitigating flooding during extreme rainfalls.
- **Increase the extent of natural areas along the waterfront**, using shoreline restoration projects such as living shorelines, and incentivize their use.
- **Address properties that are subject to recurrent flood events** or future sea level rise through voluntary buyouts, home elevation, etc.
- Strengthen infrastructure and apply best practices for long-term **sustainability, diversity of energy, and redundancy.**
- Evaluate whether existing public facilities, as well as clustered private businesses and facilities, can serve as **“Resilience Hubs”.**
- Consider designating **“Resilience Districts”** that can be eligible for targeted infrastructure and resilience projects to consolidate existing efforts.
- Encourage building owners to **retrofit existing roofs** for stormwater treatment.

GOAL 1:

Preserve and Enhance Natural Systems

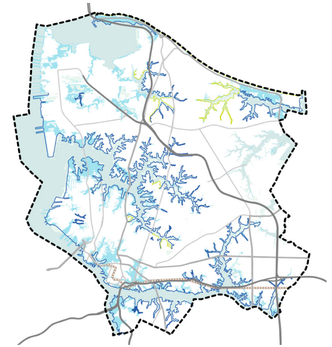
Protect and expand Norfolk's natural systems at the site, neighborhood, and citywide scales to enhance resilience and promote biodiversity of Norfolk's ecosystems.

As a coastal community and a part of the Biophilic Cities Network, Norfolk values the presence of nature in our diverse neighborhoods and waterfronts. Natural resources extend along its Chesapeake Bay beaches and dunes and in its rivers and wetlands. City parks, recreational fields and trails, open green spaces, and street trees are the fabric that connects the natural spaces. By leveraging our parks and trails and incorporating nature-based planning practices, we can protect environmental quality, reduce hazards, and create more diversity and habitat throughout the city.

1. Continue to **protect and preserve water quality** by implementing ***Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area (CBPA)*** regulations as outlined in the Code of Virginia, including maintaining existing zoning regulations and protections, and incorporating any new requirements or guidance from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area (CBPA) is a specific area within the Chesapeake Bay watershed that is designated to protect and improve its water quality. It consists of a Resource Protection Area (RPA) and a Resource Management Area and/or an Intensely Developed Area (IDA)

2. Continue to protect, enhance, restore, and **maintain the viability of critical wetlands and fisheries,** including the protection of waterfowl and wildlife habitats.



3. Reaffirm and support the policies contained in the City of Norfolk ***Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Program Supplement.***

NOTE: Additional supporting maps can be found in Norfolk's CBPA Program Supplement.

Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area (CBPA) Program Supplement was adopted by Norfolk City Council in 2003 to assist in meeting all mandated requirements set forth in the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, enacted by the Virginia General Assembly in 1988, and is included in the list of adopted plans and policies in Chapter 5, Building to 2050 and Beyond.

4. Improve water quality through the **reduction of existing pollution sources** and the redevelopment of ***Intensely Developed Areas (IDAs)*** and other areas targeted for redevelopment.

Intensely Developed Areas (IDAs) are areas where development is concentrated and little of the natural environment remains and where one of the following typically exist: development that has severely altered the natural state of the area such that it has more than 50 percent impervious surface; public sewer and water systems, or a constructed stormwater drainage system, or both, have been constructed; or housing density is equal to or greater than 4 dwelling units per acre. IDAs are designated as an overlay on the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area, as depicted in the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas Supplemental Working Map, as periodically amended.

a. Catalog existing and potential water pollution sources, including ***nonpoint source pollution***.

Nonpoint source pollution generally results from land runoff, precipitation, or other events whereby rainfall moves across a land surface and carries natural and human-made pollutants, depositing them into the surrounding waterways. It contrasts with "point source pollution" via storm drains or pipes that discharge directly.

b. Encourage voluntary adoption of pollution prevention practices.

5. Protect the potable water supply and groundwater from existing and potential sources of pollution.

6. Explore non-regulatory approaches for protection of the ***Resource Protection Area (RPA)*** buffer area, including expanded **public education efforts and the use of conservation easements**.

Resource Protection Area (RPA) is the component of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area adjacent to water bodies that have an intrinsic water quality value due to the ecological and biological processes they perform or are sensitive to impacts which may result in significant degradation to the quality of state waters.

7. Identify specific **water quality improvement projects** when neighborhood and commercial plans are prepared throughout the city to comply with the Federal Clean Water Act regulations for storm water discharges.

8. Implement the ***Sand Management Plan (SMP) Guidance Document*** to **promote sand dune and beach stability**, functionality, and resiliency while promoting the economic vitality and ecological resiliency of the Ocean View urban beach community.

Sand Management Plan (SMP) Guidance Document provides guidance and a long-term strategy for dealing with sand and dune issues along the Chesapeake Bay shoreline. It is intended to promote sand dune and beach stability, functionality, and resiliency consistent with local, state, and federal regulations.

9. Continue to **work with colleges and universities**, such as Old Dominion University (ODU) and Norfolk State University (NSU), research institutions, such as the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), and local environmental organizations to **improve water quality** in Norfolk's waterways.



(Wetland Watch, Living Infrastructure Program)

10. Coordinate with the VIMS and local colleges and universities when conducting any studies involving marine sciences, industries and resources, problems pertaining to the maritime economy, marine pollution, the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, tidal waters, and tidal shoreline erosion. Utilize the VIMS' comprehensive guidance to **foster the sustainability of shoreline resources.**

11. Consider further revisions to the ***Resilience Quotient*** to support conservation of water resources, protection of water quality and management of stormwater.

Resilience Quotient (RQ) is a scoring system used to evaluate the resilience of new development and redevelopment projects against environmental and infrastructural threats such as flooding, stormwater surges, and energy disruptions. It serves as a minimum threshold of required points that a project must achieve to comply with resilience-oriented municipal ordinances.

12. Continue to **implement wetland design changes** that allow for the landward migration of wetlands for resilience to sea level rise.

13. Pursue opportunities to **daylight (re-surface) creeks** that have been buried to expand channel capacity and provide natural amenities for communities.

14. Encourage the use of ***native species***, for sustainability and drought resistance purposes, on public and private lands wherever possible and develop programs to control ***invasive species***.

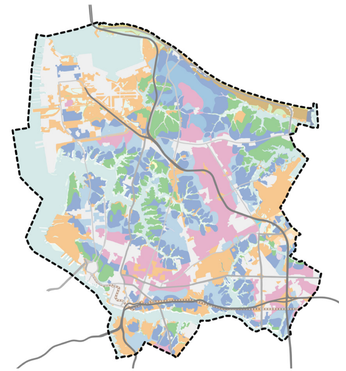
- *Native species are plants that evolved in Virginia's ecosystems, supporting local wildlife and natural processes like water filtration. Virginia and Norfolk prioritize native species through biophilic design.*
- *Invasive species are non-native plants introduced to Virginia that spread aggressively, often harming the environment, economy, or human health by outcompeting native plants and disrupting habitats. They tend to spread aggressively, damaging ecosystems, and increasing flood risks.*

15. Develop an **"existing biophilic conditions assessment"** to understand the abundance and distribution of nature within the city, as well as gaps in infrastructure, and include an assessment of current community habitat projects and areas that need projects (e.g., via mapping).

16. Promote **soil management** best practices that enhance stormwater infiltration capacity.

17. Promote the **reuse of water** through strategies such as rain barrels, rain gardens, and grey water recycling.

18. Enhance existing forested areas through **removal of invasive species** and aggressive vines, allowing for improved viewsheds, walking trails, and native habitats.



Soil Survey Geographic Database (SSURGO) Soils

Altavista	Johnston	Tetotum
Augusta	Lawnes	Tomotley
Beaches	Munden	Tomotely-Nimmo
Bohimet muck	Nawney	Udorthents
Bojac	Nimmo	Urban Land
Chapanoke	Psamments	Water
Dragston	Seabrook	
Duckston	State	

19. Protect intact ***habitat patches*** in the city and connect or reconnect them with green pathways to support people, plants, and animals.

- *Habitat patches are a defined area used by species for breeding, socializing, or obtaining resources such as food, water, or shelter.*

20. Identify major points of ***habitat fragmentation*** and opportunities for bridging fragmentation.

- *Habitat fragmentation is a process by which large, contiguous habitat is divided into smaller isolated fragments due to human activities like roads, development or agriculture.*

21. Consider developing **bird-safe design standards** or guidance that show how new and existing buildings can utilize tools like fritted glass and bird-safe window treatments.

22. Update the *Resilience Quotient* to incorporate bird-safe building treatments.

23. Consider creating a plan to manage and **coexist with urban wildlife**, to educate residents and businesses on the balance between animal control and coexistence.

BEST PRACTICES:

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND COEXISTENCE PLAN, CHICAGO, IL

Urban wildlife can cause property damage, transmit disease, create a safety hazard, and even attack pets or people. This plan outlines the best practices, based on the best available science, to reduce conflicts and help people coexist with wildlife and nature in the Chicago area. In addition to profiling 16 urban wildlife species from bats to bees and explaining new coexistence-focused management strategies, the plan also explains the shift in philosophy from control to coexistence.

24. Support incentive programs that encourage the **recycling and reduction of plastics** and support legislation at the Virginia General Assembly allowing local governments to regulate the distribution, sale, or offer of disposable plastic bags and other single-use products (e.g., bottles, straws, and food or beverage containers).

25. Support regional efforts to **reduce greenhouse gas emissions** and meet emission reduction targets.

GOAL 2:

Build and Maintain a Network of Green and Blue Infrastructure

Build a robust network of green and blue infrastructure to help the city design the coastal community of the future, improve environmental and community health, protect infrastructure, and provide recreational and scenic beauty.

Just as the city plans for its "gray infrastructure," such as roads, sidewalks or storm drains, it also needs to plan for its "blue" and "green" infrastructure, including the marshes, creeks, parks and trees that provide habitat, filter the air and water, moderate air temperatures, and provide recreation and scenic beauty.

Our green infrastructure will focus on protecting, connecting and re-greening the city to provide pathways for people and wildlife, treat stormwater and reduce flooding, and beautify the city. Our blue infrastructure will help restore shoreline habitats to support aquatic life, buffer areas from storm surge, and foster recreation, including birding, kayaking, boating, and fishing.

1. Increase the quantity, density, and diversity of trees to achieve and maintain a goal of 30% tree canopy cover.

a. Continue and expand existing street tree planting efforts (e.g., tree adoptions and right-of-way plantings), especially in neighborhoods where canopy is less than 30 percent.

b. Pursue amendments to the Zoning Ordinance that enhance tree protection, conservation, planting, and replacement requirements to help meet stormwater requirements and pollution reduction targets.

c. Develop an ***Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP)*** for the city.

> *Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) is a city strategy that guides how Norfolk cares for, protects, and expands tree canopy through planting, preserving, and connecting trees and green spaces to improve air and water quality, support wildlife, reduce flooding through stormwater uptake models, and promote nature-based design for a healthier, more resilient community. The UFMP sets goals, tracks progress and involves residents and partners to ensure the urban forest benefits people and nature over the long term.*

2. Support continued **public access** along shorelines and waterfronts.

a. Review coastline/riverline projects for the appropriateness of adding shoreline/waterfront access in the form of promenades, piers, parks, or other public spaces.

b. Ensure fully accessible multiuse pathways along waterfronts to connect neighborhoods and offer bike, pedestrian, and wheelchair access.

3. Create a citywide **waterfront access and enhancement plan** to improve and maintain public access to city waterways using marinas, boat ramps, public beaches, parks, and natural areas while minimizing impacts to water quality.

a. Identify and promote existing water access points, particularly those with parking, along the Southern Coast Paddling Trail or along the Elizabeth River Trail.

b. Add new water access points where needed, with priority given to existing parks without meaningful physical access.

c. Pursue opportunities to provide new boat ramps for motorized and non-motorized boats, including adequate parking and staging areas.

d. Promote access points and expand fishing-related infrastructure (e.g., piers, signage with fishing regulations, etc.) and education for residents and visitors of all abilities, particularly in underserved neighborhoods.

e. Promote and enhance the legal rights-of-way (ROWs) where public waterfront access already exists while balancing habitat and conservation needs.

4. Encourage **community amenities** and interventions at waterfront ROWs, like lighting, benches, trash cans, and access piers/boardwalks.

5. Create and distribute **accessible, public-facing publications** (physical and virtual) for community champions and partner organizations to understand potential improvements and improve their access points as possible/fundable.

6. Develop **coastal infrastructure as a waterfront amenity**, including blue parks, living shorelines, and waterfront trails.

7. Pursue opportunities to develop **natural blue and green corridors**, such as a ***blue belts network*** of nature-based infrastructure in areas subject to chronic floods and ***ecological continuity areas*** that prioritize native plants, habitat corridors, and wetland restoration, enhancing biodiversity.

- *A blue belts network is a planned system of connected waterways, wetlands, and natural green drainage corridors designed to manage stormwater, reduce flooding, and improve water quality, while enhancing habitat and public access. This network uses nature-based solutions to support resilient, healthy neighborhoods to connect people and nature along its waterfronts, enhancing biodiversity using natural hydrology and biophilic design principles.*
- *Ecological continuity areas are connected networks of natural habitats, protected and managed to support wildlife movement, maintain healthy ecosystems, and link people with nature. They ensure that patches of habitat remain intact and are reconnected to support wildlife movement, promoting biodiversity, clean water, and climate resilience across the city.*

BEST PRACTICES:

POLLINATOR PATHWAY PROJECT, SEATTLE, WA

Founded in 2007, the Pollinator Pathway began as an evocative civic design project that brought several elements together. By uniting land fragments, it supports the connection of biological life and contributes to walkable cities that produce less sprawl, more ecology, and less climate change.





Pollinator Pathway (Mike Kane, Sarah Bergmann)

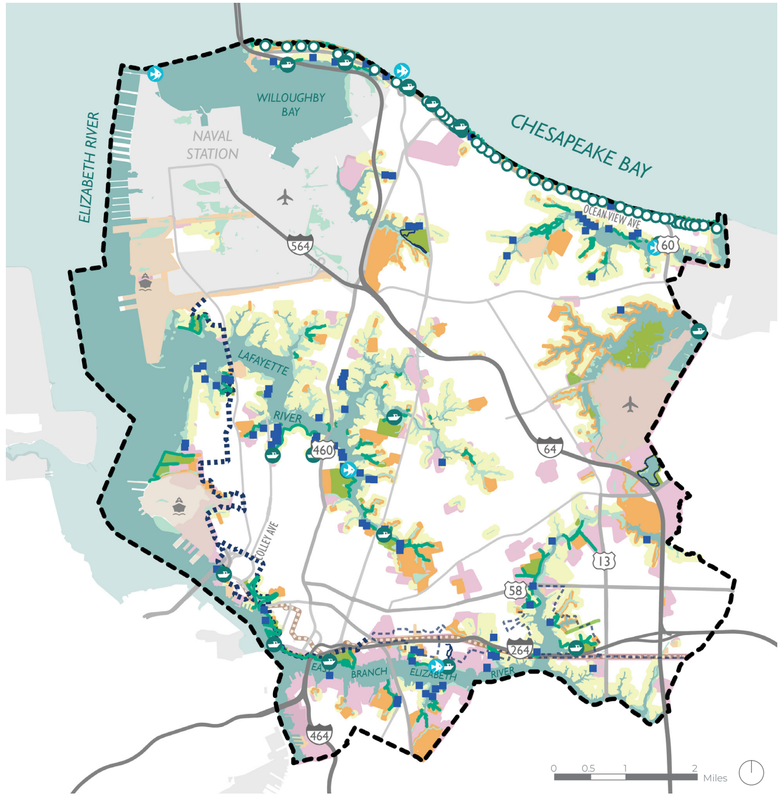


Figure 8: Public waterfront access and proximity to residential areas

Source: City of Norfolk

CURRENT WATER ACCESS
- Boat ramp
- Fishing pier
- Beach access
- Publicly accessible shoreline
- Waterfront parks

PUBLIC/PRIVATE COAST
- City owned
- Other public
- Private residential
- Private other

TRAILS
- Elizabeth River Trail
- Park trail
- Proposed Elizabeth River Trail extension
- Roads ending at water

- City limits
- Military
- Seaport/Airport
- Light rail
- Water
- Wetlands

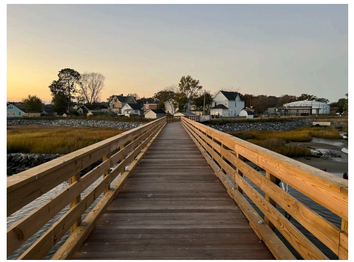
8. Explore locating new **“spongy” parks** and public spaces in areas prone to stormwater flooding so recreation spaces can provide additional storage for runoff, mitigating flooding during extreme rainfalls.

LOCAL SUCCESS:

OHIO CREEK WATERSHED PROJECT

In 2016, Norfolk was awarded a $112 million federal grant from the National Disaster Resilience Competition for the Ohio Creek Watershed Project. The project explores various landscape and hardscape options to improve flooding, public access to the waterway and connections to the rest of the city. The project includes a Resilience Park that includes a flood berm, a restored tidal creek and wetland and other environmental features as well as a multi-use sports field and places for community gatherings, sports and play. Resilience Park strives to be a model for resilient open space.







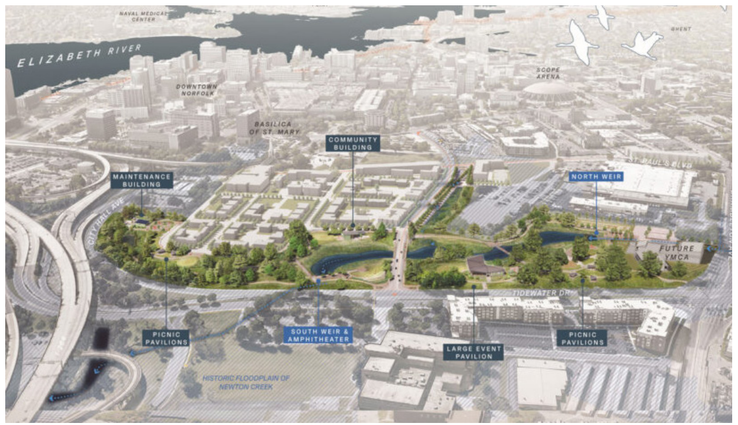
Ohio Creek Project (Waggonner & Ball)

LOCAL SUCCESS:

ST. PAUL’S BLUE/GREENWAY

Part of the St. Paul’s Transformation Project, the St. Paul’s Blue/Greenway treats and stores stormwater runoff while doubling as a community park. A key component of the HUD Choice Neighborhoods Initiative development, the Blue/Greenway improves resilience for the neighborhood, considering long-term outlook on storm events and sea level rise. The project vision returns the site to its pre-development function as a creek inlet. Natural systems manage water to reduce flooding, while creating open spaces for the community.





St Paul’s Blue/Greenway (Waggonner & Ball)

BEST PRACTICES:

RESILIENCY PARK, HOBOKEN, NJ

The Southwest Resiliency Park in Hoboken is a prime example of tying public spaces to critical stormwater functions, providing detention for up to 300,000 gallons to alleviate urban flooding and protect the quality of Hoboken's receiving waters.



Southwest Resiliency Park (Starr Whitehouse)

9. Explore updating the ***Resilience Quotient*** program to enhance natural systems and native vegetation, including green roofs and urban farming.

10. Consider creating a pattern book/toolkit for developers and citizens to implement **green infrastructure** effectively and with appropriate context to the ecosystems and communities they inhabit, focusing on living shorelines and other resilience measures along waterfronts.

11. Develop an inventory of existing **oyster resources and potential reef restoration** sites in all tidal waterbodies, similar to ongoing work in the Lafayette River, and add areas for oyster habitat creation to shoreline restoration projects where possible.

12. Utilize natural and ***biophilic design*** principles into street design wherever possible and integrate these principles into all subsequent updates to city and street design guides/manuals.

Biophilic design is a methodology for designing buildings and landscapes with a stronger connection between humans and nature within the built environment.

13. Expand the "Park Ranger" program with Parks & Recreation to include **waterfront guides** that help connect Norfolk residents to public access points, incorporating education, safety, and water-based events in recreation.

14. Consider creating or supporting **neighborhood-led "regattas"** for fun boating competitions.

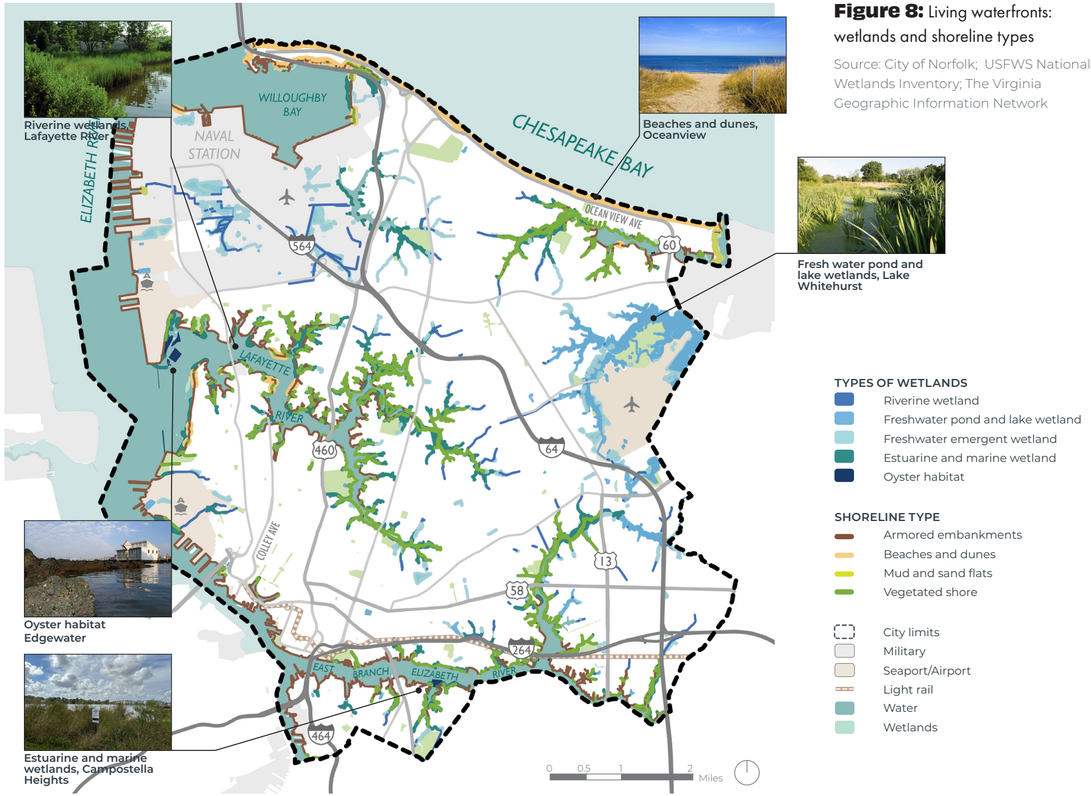


Figure 8: Living waterfronts: wetlands and shoreline types

Source: City of Norfolk; USFWS National Wetlands Inventory; The Virginia Geographic Information Network

15. Create a widespread all-ages **culture of stewardship** and conservation of our water resources and recreation.

BEST PRACTICES:

LA URBAN RANGERS: MALIBU PUBLIC BEACHES, LOS ANGELES, CA

The LA Urban Rangers are an arts and advocacy organization that mimic National Park Rangers to guide residents to underused public spaces. The Malibu Public Beaches program installs signage on public ROWs and guides the public past private property to demonstrate where they have a legal right to occupy.



Malibu Public Beaches (Samantha Bravo)

16. Pursue opportunities to provide **access and views of the water** by creating new pocket parks, green spaces, or vistas, especially for those areas which will lose open spaces due to future sea level rise.

17. Continue to **install and extend natural areas along the waterfront** using shoreline restoration projects, such as ***living shorelines***, and consider incentives that could encourage their use.

Living shorelines are nature-based coastal protections integrating native vegetation, oyster reefs, and organic materials to stabilize shorelines, reduce flooding and erosion. These projects use biophilic design to connect people and nature, help manage stormwater, and create healthier, more resilient waterfronts for people and wildlife.

18. Increase cultural cohesion through a **public outreach program** to share the environmental benefits of green infrastructure, best management practices for its maintenance, and learn from the residents how to improve the program.

19. Explore **sustainable funding mechanisms** for water access and shoreline stabilization infrastructure, including construction and long-term maintenance.

20. Promote the use of **alternative energy** through supportive code changes to permit and incentivize the use of new technologies, such as solar and wind power, while ensuring such technologies are compatible in established residential areas.

Norfolk's many streets that dead-end into water provide an opportunity for their nearby residents: improved access for recreation and fishing, and daily time with the nature all around us.

"By 2050, Norfolk will have restored access to water for all."

— Norfolk resident, Phase 1 Engagement



GOAL 3:

Protect and Adapt Communities from Flooding and Other Risks

Adapt to changing climate impacts through coastal protection, heat mitigation, urban water management, and other risk reduction and adaptation projects. Enhance and upgrade existing plans, and build on the Vision2100 framework, empowering government, investors and communities to make risk-informed decisions.

Communities within Norfolk are at differing levels of risk due to the impacts of sea-level rise and climate change. Though Norfolk is a leader in resilience projects and green infrastructure, further adaptation measures are still needed. Adaptation policies should take into consideration the difference in risk exposure and need between communities, creating equitable solutions for the full range of our neighborhoods and residents. These policies should also be informed by the development of a robust toolkit to support stakeholders pursuing informed and sustainable land use, infrastructure, and development measures.

1. Coordinate citywide emergency planning with regional, state, and federal agencies, in alignment with the Emergency Operations Plan and the Hampton Roads Hazard Mitigation Plan.

a. Evaluate after-action reports to gauge response times and isolate areas for improvement following emergencies.

b. Enhance the City's ability to provide residents with timely information and mitigative actions, both prior to and during emergent events.

c. Support the Department of Emergency Management's efforts to implement its Short-Term/Intermediate Recovery Plan and Long-Term Pre-Disaster Recovery Framework, which provide an organizational framework and proactive guide by which the city and its partners can begin an effective recovery to any incident or catastrophic disaster in Norfolk.

2. Support the implementation of the ***Resilient Norfolk Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM)*** Project, which will reduce the city's risk from coastal flooding and damage from nor'easters, hurricanes, and other significant storm events.

> *Resilient Norfolk Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM): includes structural, property-specific, non-structural, natural and nature based features such as storm-surge barriers, floodwalls, levees, home elevations, oyster reefs and living shorelines, to mitigate flooding from major coastal storms.*

3. Complete and implement strategies to **manage urban water within the city**, within the floodplain, and at the city edge through efforts such as the Stormwater Design and Construction Manual, Floodplain Management Plan, and the Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) project.

4. Explore a range of options to **address properties that are subject to recurrent flood events** or future sea level rise.

a. Programs may include a ***Transfer of Development Rights*** program, funds for voluntary buyouts, and elevating homes out of the floodplain, directing growth toward locations with reduced flood risk.

> *Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is a process where property owners can move development rights from protected or environmentally sensitive sending areas, encouraging resilient, sustainable growth in receiving areas. This zoning mechanism allows landowners to preserve nature and water quality while directing new development to areas better suited for it, in line with local resilience and biophilic goals.*

b. Longer term strategies to explore include reinvesting revenue from new developments into climate initiatives, sustainable development, and transit.



Elevated coastal homes (WRT)

5. Continue to implement programs that maintain and further **improve the City's rating** in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System.

6. Continue improvements to the **stormwater management system** and provide regular maintenance of features; continue inspecting structures to ensure compliance with state permit requirements.

a. Prioritize public spaces and large facilities for improved stormwater management, effectively reducing runoff.

b. Explore Stormwater Management Fee reduction credits for new developments that implement ***groundwater recharge*** at the individual site scale.

Groundwater recharge is a process where rainwater or treated water soaks into the ground and refills underground aquifers, helping maintain water supplies, reduce flooding, and support healthy ecosystems. The process involving replenishing underground aquifers through methods like injecting highly treated wastewater or retaining stormwater via biophilic-designed systems is essential to mitigate subsidence, saltwater intrusion, and support water resilience.

BEST PRACTICES:

NJDEP STORMWATER REQUIREMENTS FOR GROUNDWATER RECHARGE, NEW JERSEY

The State of New Jersey's groundwater recharge requirements protect aquifers by requiring that either the pre-development groundwater recharge volume be maintained, or that the increase in runoff volume from the site's post-development 2-year storm be infiltrated.



NJDEP Groundwater recharge vegetated swale (Princetonhydro)

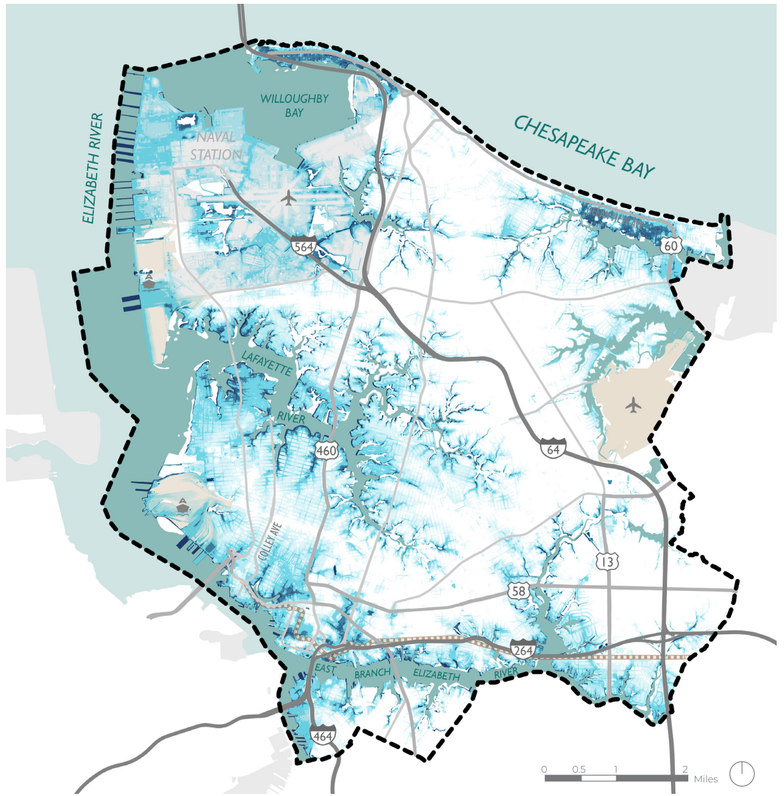


Figure 10: Future Coastal & Tidal Flood Risk

Source: City of Norfolk; NOAA, 2022

7. Protect the city's **existing public potable water supply** infrastructure by assessing and planning for groundwater impacts and risks, such as saltwater intrusion.

8. Incentivize development by reducing ***Resilience Quotient (RQ)*** requirements in low-risk areas.

9. Explore **funding mechanisms** to implement neighborhood protection and flood improvements (e.g., dune management, beach replenishment/renourishment, channel dredging, benefit water quantity banking/market-based incentives, etc.).

BEST PRACTICES:

STORMWATER RETENTION CREDIT TRADING PROGRAM, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Washington D.C. implemented its Stormwater Retention Credit (SRC) trading program in 2013 as part of a comprehensive approach. The program, established through stormwater regulations, requires all new developments and major renovation projects to install green infrastructure to retain stormwater on-site, or purchase SRCs to meet all or part of their stormwater retention requirements off-site.



Washington DC Mount Olivet rain garden (Matt Kane)

BEST PRACTICES:

CLIMATE RESILIENCE FUND IN SEAPORT DISTRICT, BOSTON, MA

The Boston developer-funded Climate Resiliency Fund in Seaport District uses land value capture as a mechanism for stacking financing for resilient infrastructure in a high land value area of Boston that still has development opportunities.



Boston Seaport district (Denis Tangney Jr)

Living shorelines can contribute to climate mitigation (WRT)

GOAL 4:

Integrate Resilience and Sustainability in Capital and Infrastructure Planning

Incorporate best practices in energy, resilience, and sustainability in city infrastructure, and develop a pipeline of resilience plans and projects at all scales that leverage a diverse range of funding sources.

Through tools encompassing public works and private incentives, Norfolk's resilience initiatives can benefit all current and future stakeholders. Planning and sustaining resilient infrastructure and capital improvements will need to be responsive to a variety of future funding, energy, and climate scenarios.

1. Strengthen infrastructure and apply best practices for long-term **sustainability, diversity of energy, and redundancy.**

a. Reduce energy consumption through the application and promotion of energy efficient design features and technologies.

b. Encourage new infrastructure to be built to minimum requirements to ensure that it will meet the needs of communities during their entire lifespan, considering future climate conditions.

c. Continue to prioritize maintenance and upgrade needs of existing critical infrastructure and public utilities.

d. Explore the incorporation of green and blue roofs and walls into public buildings wherever possible.

e. Encourage the use of solar on municipal and school facilities.

2. Support the City's **Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program**, which enables owners of multifamily, commercial, and industrial properties to obtain low-cost, long-term financing for energy efficiency, renewable energy, water efficiency improvements, resiliency, and stormwater management projects.

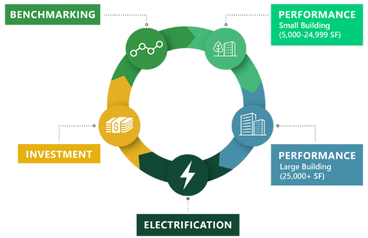
3. Continue efforts to **expand clean energy options** and upgrades in city-owned buildings and facilities (e.g., Better Buildings Challenge), such as replacing city equipment with energy efficient upgrades when equipment is refreshed (LED lights, HVAC, etc.).

4. Advocate for policy changes in the building code that **promote diversity of energy** and redundancy of options.

BEST PRACTICES:

DENVER BUILDING CODE UPDATES, DENVER, CO

By 2027, Denver is requiring that 50% of all new space and water heating needs to be accomplished with electric heaters, and that air conditioning units are replaced with units that can both heat and cool, like heat pumps.



GOAL 5:

Support a Comprehensive and Coordinated Approach to Building Resilience

Build individual, citywide, and regional capacity to withstand external shocks or stresses and adapt to change.

Norfolk has been adapting to a changing climate with large scale flood protection, green stormwater infrastructure, and other public investments in our shared spaces. To ensure long-term sustainability and resilience, the City also supports and encourages opportunities for coordination with individual actors and property owners, as well as regional partners to pursue adaptation and sustainability measures.

1. Continue to participate in the development and implementation of the Hampton Roads Hazard Mitigation Plan to **address potential hazards on a regional basis** as well as floodplain management planning at the local and regional levels.

2. Continue to assess community needs for flood-related information and develop resources that **convey information to residents**, businesses, students, commuters, and other audiences in and around Norfolk (e.g., Norfolk's Program for Public Information (PPI) & Flood Insurance Coverage Improvement Plan (CP)).

3. Evaluate whether existing public facilities, as well as clustered private businesses and facilities, can serve as ***"Resilience Hubs."***

A resilience hub is a community-serving facility, equipped to provide social services, resources, information, and a safe gathering place before, during, and after emergencies. These hubs help neighborhoods prepare for and recover from storms and climate impacts, advance equity, and support city resilience goals with sustainable energy and nature-based stormwater management interventions.

BEST PRACTICES:

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY HUBS, BALTIMORE MD

Baltimore's network of non-profit and faith-based community organizations are key partners in providing resilient spaces and services in the case of emergency or disaster. 18 Hubs throughout the city create spaces for residents to receive food, water, and charging capabilities, and serve as staging areas for supplies.



Baltimore Resiliency Hub (Maryland Energy Administration)

4. Consider designating ***"Resilience Districts"*** that can be eligible for targeted infrastructure and resilience projects to consolidate existing efforts.

A Resilience District is a geographically defined area implementing coordinated strategies to address flooding and climate risks while enhancing ecological and community health and improving environmental sustainability, economic and social resilience. These districts create safer, healthier, and more adaptable neighborhoods for the future by ensuring adaptive, equitable resilience planning across public and private sectors.

LOCAL SUCCESS:

NORTH COLLEY ECODISTRICT

The Elizabeth River Ryan Resilience Lab, opened on June 1, 2024, serves as a community space for education in resilience and headquarters of Elizabeth River project. It has catalyzed the formation of an EcoDistrict along North Colley Avenue - collaboration with local community, academic institutions, and the city aimed at securing funding for resilient revitalization of the neighborhood and mitigating the risks of displacement.



The Elizabeth River Ryan Resilience Lab

5. Provide citizens with pathways to adapt to changing **risks at the parcel level** (e.g., ***Retain Your Rain***, Celebrate Trees, SolSmart, etc.).

Retain Your Rain is an initiative by the City of Norfolk to encourage residents to reduce the amount of rainwater that goes into street drains and underground pipes by capturing it with small-scale green infrastructure at home, including rain gardens and help mitigate flooding.

6. Create incentives for tree planting by citizens and businesses.

7. Expand existing recognition programs for **community tree planting** projects to include categories for businesses, religious institutions, schools, and others.

8. Seek new **community partners** to provide guidance, support, and grant cost-sharing to private property owners in areas of the city not served by current community environmental organizations.

9. Partner with local nonprofit groups to encourage residents to **plant "3Bs" (birds, bees, butterflies) pathways** and add more information to the city website about the importance of habitat.

10. Use schools and parks as **demonstration sites** for low impact development, including constructed and natural green infrastructure, and continue to engage students as designers.

11. Encourage building owners to **retrofit existing roofs** for stormwater treatment.

12. Expand or create volunteer programs to **maintain** the aesthetics and health of green infrastructure projects.

13. Work with local land trusts, such as the Coastal Virginia Conservancy, to champion the **preservation of land for public recreation and education.**

14. Work with varied marine stakeholders (e.g. recreation and industrial users) to help **resolve potential conflicts** in waterways and along waterfronts.

a. Consider, implement, and manage No Wake Zones in areas of public or ecological sensitivity.

15. Encourage residents and businesses to work with local nonprofit groups to protect or **expand wetlands on private property.**

16. Coordinate with Norfolk Public Schools to promote and facilitate opportunities to incorporate **nature-based curriculum.**

17. Explore opportunities for additional collaboration with the HRPDC to **address regional energy** and sustainability needs, such as the creation of a new committee.

18. Incentivize **water reuse in private development** to reduce the amount of water withdrawn from the Potomac Aquifer and bolster water supply reliability.

BEST PRACTICES:

DOMINO DISTRICT WATER REUSE, BROOKLYN, NY

At the Domino Sugar Redevelopment Project, rainwater captured on site is treated before reuse in non-potable applications such as toilet flushing, water tower cooling, and irrigation. This serves to both reduce the carbon footprint of operations while also increasing the resiliency of the building's water supply.



Domino Park (Barrett Doherty)

Embracing Nature: Putting Actions in Place

Norfolk's low-lying neighborhoods face some of the city's greatest climate challenges, but they also present a powerful opportunity to lead with resilience. Through targeted investments in nature-based infrastructure, risk-informed planning, and community-driven adaptation, Norfolk can protect our most vulnerable areas while creating a wide range of additional benefits, for residents and nature alike.

By expanding public access to the waterfront, restoring natural systems, and integrating green and blue infrastructure across all scales - from household rain gardens to regional stormwater networks - our city can embrace its identity as a water city. In doing so, Norfolk will not only adapt to a changing climate, but set a new standard for living in harmony with it.



Public water access infrastructure (WRT)

Where in the city could these ideas go?

Encourage **community amenities at waterfront ROWs** like lighting, benches, trash cans and boardwalks. **2.4**

Develop natural **blue and green corridors,** or blue belts network of nature-based infrastructure that prioritize native plants, habitat corridors and wetland restoration **2.7**

Locate new **"spongy" parks** and public spaces in areas prone to stormwater flooding to provide storage for runoff and mitigate floods in extreme rainfall. **2.8**

Pursue opportunities to r**esurface buried creeks** to expand channel capacity and provide natural amenities. **1.13**

Support **continued public access** along shorelines and waterfronts in the form of promenades, piers and parks **2.2**

Explore programs to **address recurring flooding** (eg: elevating homes, voluntary buyouts, Transfer of Development Rights) **3.4**

Develop coastal infrastructure as a waterfront amenity, including blue parks, living shorelines, and waterfront trails. **2.6**

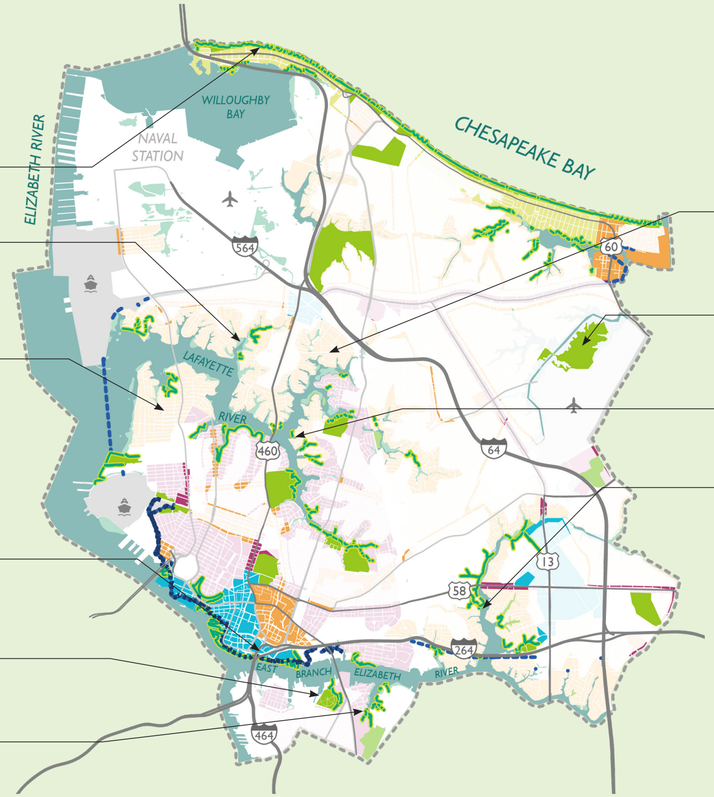


Figure 11: Embracing Nature: Putting Actions in Place

Where and how to enact our Plan Actions has yet to be determined, but here are some ideas of prototypical places in the city they could be sited.

Source: City of Norfolk

Evaluate whether existing public facilities as well as clustered private businesses can serve as **Resilience Hubs** **5.3**

Protect **intact habitat patches** and connect them with green pathways to support people, plants, and animals. **1.19**

Provide access and views of the water by creating new pocket parks, passive green spaces or vistas **2.16**

Promote waterfront access points and expand **fishing related infrastructure (piers, etc)** **2.3**

OVERLAYS

- Vision 2100 - Green & Purple Zone
- USACE Downtown Floodwall
- all USACE planned interventions
- Publicly Accessible Shoreline

PLACE TYPES

- Community Mixed-Use
- Corridor Mixed-Use
- Regional Activity Center
- Sustain - Coastal
- Sustain - Suburban
- Sustain - Traditional
- Open Space
- Conservation

Connecting the City

Norfolk sits at the crossroads of land, water, and bridges—a regional hub where freight, rail, highways, and transit converge. For many residents, though, navigating the city is not seamless. Barriers like at-grade rail crossings, limited transit access, and flood-prone corridors can make everyday travel challenging and unpredictable. Essential infrastructure, from roads to bike lanes to broadband, must keep pace with a city that is growing and changing.

To become a truly connected city, Norfolk must stitch its neighborhoods together with safe, equitable, and climate-resilient mobility options. That means building on recent progress—from an expanded bike network to modernized bus service—to create a multimodal system that works for residents of all ages and abilities. It means aligning transportation with land use through transit-oriented development, building a network of trails, and ensuring ease of connectivity through active travel between neighborhoods and mobility hubs. It means linking people to the places that matter—schools, jobs, parks, healthcare, and gathering spaces, through a network that is reliable, safe, and welcoming.

Virginia's only light rail system, historic bridge, rail and streetcar rights-of-way, and miles of waterfront all offer unique opportunities to reimagine how people might move and how places could better connect. Protecting and enhancing Norfolk's critical utilities—clean water, efficient energy, and fast broadband—must be part of this vision, ensuring that the systems people rely on daily are as resilient and accessible as the streets they travel.

A city that is easier to navigate is also a city where opportunity is easier to reach, especially for those historically left out. With thoughtful investment, Norfolk can strengthen its internal connections, bridge its divides, and cement its role as a resilient, accessible hub of the Hampton Roads region.

(City of Norfolk)



> **Norfolk will be more accessible via public transit and more connected to other cities in the region.**
>
> — Norfolk resident, Workshop #1, October 2023

Connecting the City
COMMUNITY VISION



(City of Norfolk)



(WRT)



(WPA)



I envision the future Norfolk as increasingly dense and vibrant with more housing and better connectivity - where people can walk or bike to neighborhood establishments, their office, and parts of the city.

— Norfolk resident, Phase 1 Engagement

What We Heard:

Norfolk residents envision a future where getting around their city is safe, seamless, and sustainable.

Public transit should be reliable and affordable, with expanded light rail and mass transit, and a robust bus network connecting every neighborhood. Walkable, bike-friendly streets should make it easy to get around without a car, reducing congestion and promoting healthier lifestyles.

Smart transportation planning should emphasize green infrastructure and connectivity, linking communities through safer sidewalks, designated bike lanes, and well-maintained trails. Enhanced transit accessibility could provide efficient connections to key destinations, including the airport, universities, and regional hubs.

Norfolk has the potential to be a leader in multimodal transportation, ensuring people of all ages and abilities can navigate the city with ease. Thoughtful investments in mobility could create a well-connected, inclusive, and forward-thinking city that meets the needs of future generations.







(City of Norfolk)

By 2050, Norfolk will be more accessible via public transit, and more connected to other cities in the region.

— Norfolk resident, Phase 2 Engagement

Connecting the City



Goals:

GOAL 1:
Enhance Multi-Modal Transportation throughout the City

GOAL 2:
Improve Safety and Reliability along Corridors

GOAL 3:
Improve Intracity Travel and Connections

GOAL 4:
Protect and Enhance Transportation and Utility Infrastructure

GOAL 5:
Support Regional, National, and International Connections

Big Ideas:

- Promote, encourage, and **incentivize transit-oriented development (TOD).**
- Reduce the number of and **mitigate the impacts of blocked railroad crossings** within the city.
- Foster a safe **pedestrian experience at crossings and beneath overpasses** through urban design strategies such as street design changes, public art, inviting lighting, and landscape improvements.
- **Expand high-capacity transit** within the city, especially to major nodes like Naval Station Norfolk and the Military Circle area.
- Implement the **expanded bicycle network**.
- Align transportation infrastructure and facilities with **accessible housing and community services** for elderly and disabled residents.
- **Develop greenways** and link additional trails and pathways to the Elizabeth River Trail to create a complete system.
- Seek funding to actively reverse historic injustices caused by highways and **reconnect Norfolk's neighborhoods.**
- Use **micro transit** to fill in the gaps in the transit system.
- Explore the feasibility of **reusing former rail lines** and former or underutilized rights-of-way for trails and connections.
- Raise and **reinforce critical access roads** and evacuation routes.
- Support the implementation of the City's **Electric Vehicle Charging** Plan.
- **Bury overhead infrastructure** In areas of low flood risk.
- **Advocate for the completion of a holistic regional transportation network** of sidewalks, bike paths, trails, complete streets, transit stops, etc.
- **Expand passenger rail service and intercity bus service** between Norfolk to both in-state and out-of-state locations.
- Construct regional infrastructure that **connects the Peninsula to the Southside.**
- Advocate for a **cohesive wayfinding and signage system** across all modes of regional travel.

GOAL 1:

Enhance Multi-Modal Transportation throughout the City

Enhance Norfolk's existing multi-modal transportation network, and foster a culture that encourages multi-modal travel.

Improving local-scale mobility is essential for seamlessly getting residents and visitors to their daily destinations. By incentivizing commercial and residential development near transit stops and stations, coordinating land use planning, and enhancing public transit experiences through passenger amenities, we can create a more connected and sustainable community and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Clearly marked entry points, expanded bike networks, and safe cycling programs will further support this shift, making multi-modal travel an integral part of Norfolk's culture.

1. Promote, encourage, and incentivize ***transit-oriented development (TOD)*** by coordinating municipal transportation, housing, and the Future Land Use Plan to create a more connected and efficient built environment and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): A planning and design strategy that focuses on creating vibrant, walkable communities centered around public transportation hubs. TOD typically includes mixed-use developments with residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, all within easy reach of transit stations, making it convenient for people to live, work, and play without needing to drive.

a. Prioritize TOD near public transit stops and stations and within the Community Mixed-Use, Corridor Mixed-Use, and Regional Activity Center place types, as well as Transit Supportive Areas.

2. Continue local outreach, educational campaigns, partnerships and community efforts with local advocacy organizations, as outlined in Norfolk's ***Vision Zero strategy***, to raise awareness about the benefits of multi-modal transportation and its role in increasing safety and mobility for all road users.

A Vision Zero Strategy aims to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries while ensuring safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all. It involves collaboration among stakeholders, prioritizing equity, managing traffic speeds, and setting clear timelines for achieving zero traffic deaths and serious injuries.

a. Continue to promote the federal initiative Safe Routes to School Programs as outlined in the Vision Zero Strategies.

b. Offer programs to teach safe cycling practices and maintenance skills and promote cycling events such as bike-to-work days and community rides.

c. Continue to regularly gather feedback from multimodal users through surveys and events.

d. Consider the establishment of a grant program to support community efforts that encourage bicycling as a mode of transportation.



(WRT)

3. Use **interim design strategies** to improve roadways and public spaces in the near-term and at a lower cost.

a. Install short-term test improvements (e.g., ***parklets***, striping to test shorter pedestrian crossings, etc.) to support a "proof of concept" approach to long-term construction projects or ideas and test new designs and amenities.

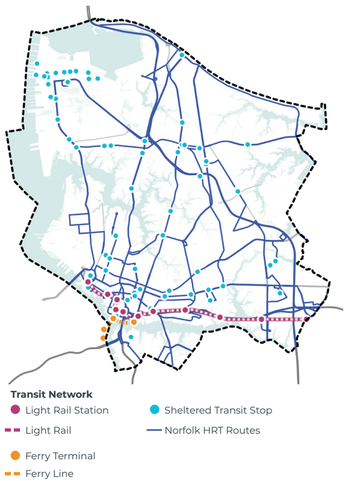
> ***Parklets*** *are public seating platforms that transform parking spaces into community spaces, featuring seating, greenery, bike racks, among other features.*

4. Co-locate mobility options wherever possible, using the Future Land Use Plan for guidance (transit stops/stations, Lime bike/scooter stations) and work to provide seating, signage, and lighting.

5. Explore the creation of **car-free zones** in busy commercial areas to enhance safety and encourage travel for all non-vehicular users.

6. Support **access to major entry points at key destinations** (e.g., Norfolk International Airport, the Port of Virginia, and Downtown Norfolk) by creating clearly marked and inviting entry points, landmarks, and welcome and directional signage to guide people to multi-modal transportation options.

7. Continue to enhance existing transit stops to support the experience of riding public transit in coordination with Hampton Roads Transit.



BEST PRACTICES:

LOS ANGELES SIDEWALK AND TRANSIT AMENITIES PROGRAM, LOS ANGELES, CA

Los Angeles' Sidewalk and Transit Amenities Program (STAP) aims to install or upgrade bus shelters and shade structures to address the city's equity and heat indexes. Shelters include real-time bus tracking, a digital art program, smart lighting technology, bench seating, and safety features.



(Michael Juarez)



(City of Norfolk)

8. Provide **free, covered, and secure bicycle parking** at key nodes throughout the city.

9. Explore the establishment of a ***curb space management*** program within the public realm that considers pedestrian and transit mobility, access for people, and access for goods, amenities, and storage.

> ***Curb space management*** *involves strategically allocating curb space to maximize community benefits, enhance safety, and support economic goals. It balances the needs of all roadway users, including drivers, rideshare services, pedestrians, emergency services, transit, local businesses, and streetscape.*

10. Continue to support ***Transportation Demand Management (TDM)*** efforts that **encourage multi-modal transportation use** and reduce barriers to mobility and transportation.

> ***Transportation Demand Management:*** *involves strategies to optimize transportation systems by reducing or redistributing travel demand, promoting alternatives like public transit, biking, and carpooling.*

11. Identify **potential funding sources for improvements** and implement the recommendations for current projects and studies of Department of Transportation, based on funding availability.

12. Improve **access to bicycles, helmets, and bike locks,** especially for lower-income families through subsidies or repair programs.

13. Work with the Department of Parks and Recreation to create **learn-to-ride and safe biking classes.**

BEST PRACTICES:

SAFE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM, CHICAGO, IL

Chicago's Department of Transportation operates a SAFE Ambassador program (Streets Are For Everybody) that aims to provide direct education for residents through safety presentations, trainings, workshops, and learn to ride classes.



(City of Norfolk)

GOAL 2:

Improve Safety and Reliability along Corridors

Improve safety and reliability along Norfolk's key corridors serving automobiles, trucks, and rail.

Norfolk's key corridors are vital for the movement of people and goods. Creating a resilient and connected transportation network can accommodate all modes of travel while also prioritizing safety and efficiency. By improving freight routes, redesigning streets, and implementing curb space management initiatives, we can enhance safety, reduce congestion, and support efficient transportation.

1. Implement **safer crossings at high volume intersections** for all modes of transportation.

a. Reference National Association of City Transportation Official's Urban Street Design Guide for high volume intersection design recommendations.

2. Continue to **champion Vision Zero strategies** under the three overarching themes: improve data collection & evaluation, create safe streets for all users, and foster a culture of safety.

3. Support the implementation of the Department of Transportation's ***Safety Action Plan***, which aims to reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries to zero, improve safety for all road users, enhance the safety of vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, bicyclists, and older adults, and foster a collaborative approach to roadway safety among local governments, transportation agencies, and community stakeholders.

> ***Safety Action Plan:*** *aims to provide accessible and equitable multimodal transportation options througout the city, promoting a safer, more inclusive, and connected transportation network for all.*

4. Optimize freight movement and minimize impacts on urban mobility.

a. Develop freight and truck efficiency plans/ programs to improve the efficiency of freight movement, such as off-hour deliveries and dedicated freight lanes.

b. Explore measures to minimize noise from freight and truck traffic.

c. Designate and improve critical vehicle freight routes. Coordinate with Virginia's statewide transportation plan, VTrans, to address freight system trends and needs.

d. Create a city-oriented Designated Truck Route Map that expands on the Virginia Department of Transportation's regional map and reduces congestion on main corridors.

5. Support local, state, and national efforts to reduce the number of and mitigate the impacts of **blocked railroad crossings** within the city.

6. Develop zoning standards that **protect land uses in proximity to rail facilities**, including setbacks between buildings and the rail right-of-way, safety barriers, fencing, and noise mitigation.

7. Continue the implementation of the **Street Light Replacement Program** and determine the best method to mitigate brightness and light intrusion.

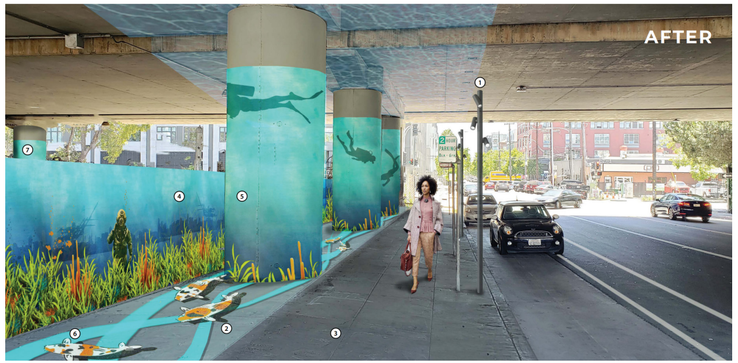
8. Explore urban design strategies, such as street design changes, public art, inviting lighting, and landscape improvements. to enhance safety and comfort for all modes of transportation; better accommodate truck and bus turn movements along key corridors while continuing to allow safe pedestrian and bicyclist movement, with a particular focus on the **pedestrian experience at crossings and beneath overpasses.**

BEST PRACTICES:

UNDERCROSSING IMPROVEMENT DESIGN STRATEGY, OAKLAND, CA

The City of Oakland created an interdisciplinary strategy called "Walk This Way" to improve underpasses and foster safer, walkable neighborhoods. These design strategies are being used in an ongoing project to revitalize the I-880 underpass that separates the Old Oakland and Chinatown communities.





(City of Oakland)



Figure 12: Street Typologies

Source: City of Norfolk; VDOT

GOAL 3:

Improve Intracity Travel and Connections

Improve transportation options of all modes to seamlessly connect neighborhood nodes and improve local-scale mobility options at the ***first and last mile,*** to get residents and visitors to their daily destinations.

Norfolk's transportation network should be inclusive, efficient, and accessible to all. By improving infrastructure, expanding transit options, and ensuring safe and reliable connections, we can support the safety, connectedness, and prosperity of our communities. Creating a citywide comprehensive multimodal network can link key destinations, reconnect divided neighborhoods, and enhance the overall transit experience for everyone.

Additionally, neighborhoods thrive when they are well-connected and accessible. By adding pedestrian and bicycle pathways that respect the unique character of each neighborhood, we can create safer, more vibrant communities, fostering a sense of community and improving overall quality of life.

First mile and last mile refers to the initial and final segments of a journey within a transportation network, encompassing the distance from a person's starting point to the nearest public transportation hub and from the hub to their final destination.

1. Support efforts to **expand *high-capacity transit*** within the city, especially to major nodes like Naval Station Norfolk and the Military Circle area, and use the Future Land Use Plan for additional guidance.

High-capacity transit *refers to public transportation systems designed to efficiently move large numbers of passengers, such as bus rapid transit, light rail, and commuter rail.*

2. Continue to **implement the expanded bicycle network** in alignment with the City of Norfolk Bicycle and Pedestrian Strategic Plan to enhance connectivity within Norfolk.



Northside Park Bike Trail (City of Norfolk)

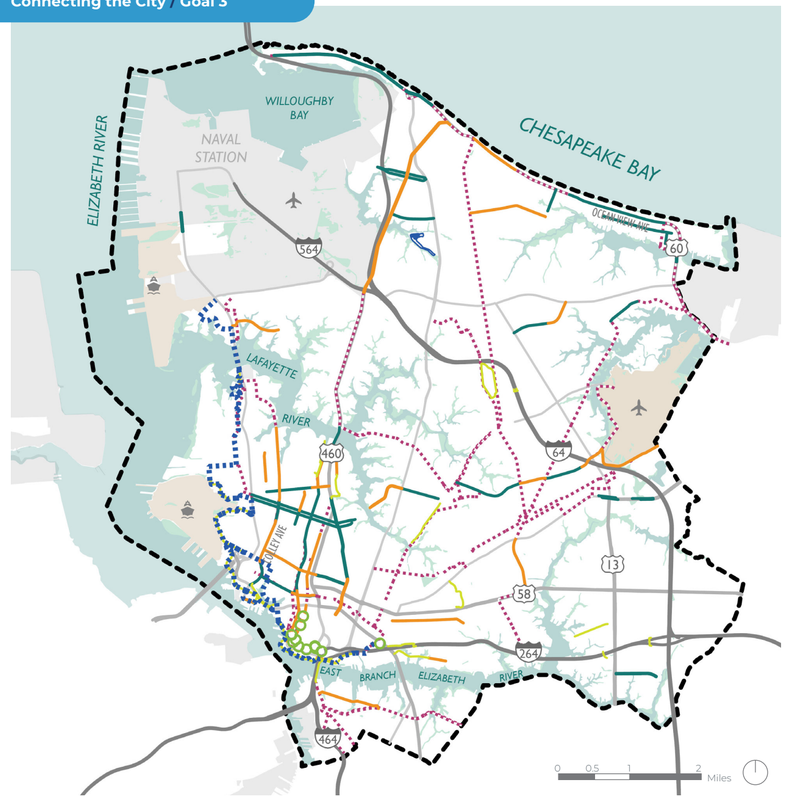


Figure 13: Existing and planned bike infrastructure

Source: City of Norfolk; HRTPO

MOBILITY

- Off-road shared path
- Bike lane
- Shared road (sharrow)
- Lime bike/scooter corral
- Future Strategic Plan Corridors
- Elizabeth River Trail
- Mountain Bike Trail

- City limits
- Military
- Seaport/Airport
- Light rail
- Water
- Wetlands

3. Determine infrastructure needs and improvements, including significant new, expanded, or relocated facilities and roadways, in alignment with the Commonwealth Transportation Board's ***Statewide Transportation Plan and Six-Year Improvement Plan*** and support implementation efforts.

- ***Statewide Transportation Plan*** *or VTrans is a long-range multimodal strategy that guides Virginia's transportation investments and policies over a 20-25 year horizon.*
- ***Six-Year Improvement Plan*** *is Virginia's official transportation funding plan, developed and approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. It allocates public funds over a six year period to prioritize and advance transportation projects across the state.*

Figure 14: List of VDOT Six Year Improvement Plan Projects

Source: City of Norfolk.

PROJECT ID	PROJECT NAME/ DESCRIPTION	2045 LRTP	PROJECT COST (in Thousands)
125602	I-64/I-264 Interchange Phase IIIA	Yes	$517,016
120863	Hampton Roads Express Lanes, Segment 1B	Yes	$421,688
18968	R000 - I-564 Intermodal Connector	N/A	$201,451
119637	Hampton Roads Express Lanes, Segment 1A	Yes	$195,631
57048	#SMART18 - RTE 264 Interchange Improvements 64WB Ramp To 264EB	N/A	$167,617
123154	Air Terminal Interchange-Intermodal Connector Eastern	Yes	$109,040
118642	St. Paul's Roadway Improvements - Phase 2	Yes	$62,643
59175	Air Terminal Interchange - Intermodal Connector - Western	Yes	$24,469
110321	I-64 Express Lanes-Segment I	Yes	$18,946
117138	St. Paul's Roadway Improvements (Phase I)	N/A	$ 15,376
115244	#SMART20 Virginia Beach Blvd Widening George St To Newtown	Yes	$15,701
123166	#SMART24 Virginia Beach Blvd - George Street To Winburne Ln	Yes	$9,268
106693	I-64/I-264 Interchange-Phase IIIA	Yes	$7,500
117116	Westminster Avenue Reconstruction	N/A	$7,450
120908	Chesapeake Blvd & Sheppard Ave Intersection Improvements	N/A	$3,466
123053	#SMART24 Brambleton Ave/Tidewater Dr Intersection Improvement	N/A	$1,951
111788	#SMART18 - I-264 W Off-Ramp At Ballentine Boulevard	N/A	$2,154
113201	Little Creek Rd/Shore Drive Intersection Improvements	N/A	$1,886
115236	#SMART20 Terminal Blvd/Diven St Intersection Improvements	N/A	$1,733
111019	#SMART18 - Brambleton Ave/Park Ave Intersection Improvements	N/A	$1,339
115424	Southside Bike Lane Network	N/A	$1,016
T30088	#SMART26 Project Pipeline HR04 Military Highway	N/A	$4,507
123169	#SMART24 Ocean View Ave Pedestrian Improvements	N/A	$2,473
120912	Tidewater Drive Improvements At Lakewood	N/A	$3,671
123172	#SMART24 Little Creek Road Pedestrian Improvements	N/A	$7,361

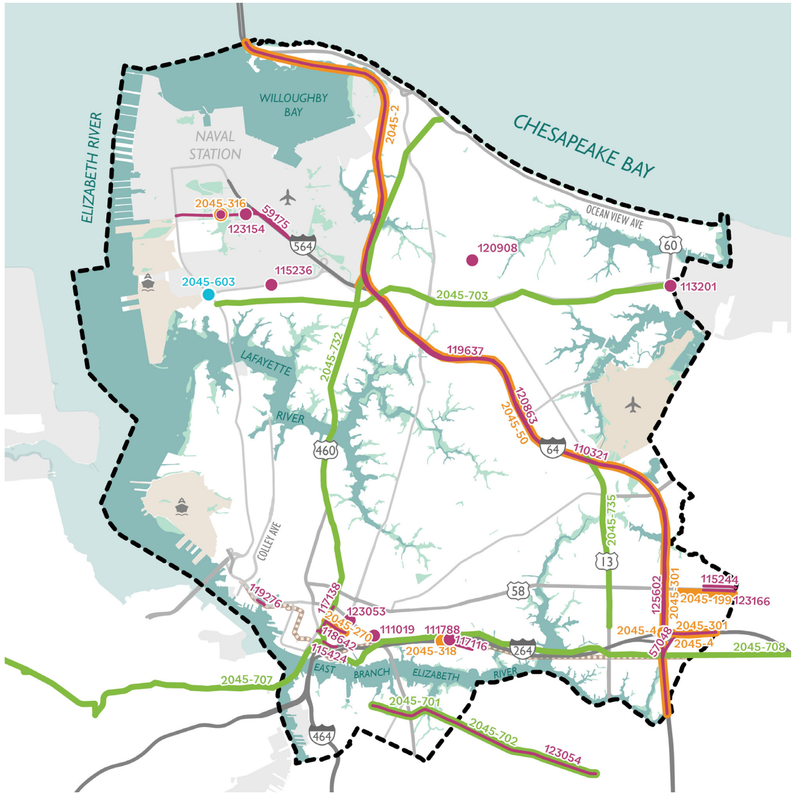
PROJECT ID	PROJECT NAME/ DESCRIPTION	2045 LRTP	PROJECT COST (in Thousands)
123165	#SMART24 Chesapeake Boulevard Pedestrian Improvements	N/A	$4,500
124683	#SMART24 Chesapeake Blvd Ped Improvements-Consolidated	N/A	$16,688
123639	26th Street/Lafayette Boulevard Lane Repurposing	N/A	$2,109
123635	Military Highway At Poplar Hall Shared Use Path	N/A	$9,246
123638	Downtown Norfolk Market Strt St. Paul's Comprehensive Study	N/A	$2,500
125359	Intersection Improvements And Pedestrian Crossing -Norfolk	N/A	$6,417
109572	Norfolk Bus Shelters And Pedestrian Improvements	N/A	$1,292
119276	Brambleton Avenue Bridge Rehabilitation	N/A	$4,000
120917	Hampton Blvd & Magnolia Intersection Improvements	N/A	$2,969
115379	Newtown Road Corridor Study	N/A	$250
T30091	#SMART26 Project Pipeline Hr-23-06 Monticello Ave Spot Improvements	N/A	$7,568
123054	#SMART24 Southside Bicycle And Pedestrian Improvements	N/A	$4,623
119210	#SMART22 Centralized Transit Signal Priority	N/A	$1,992
119229	#SMART22 Railroad Crossing Message Signs	N/A	$5,828

Figure 14: List of VDOT Six Year Improvement Plan Projects

Source: City of Norfolk.

4. Support the implementation and advancement of **Norfolk's Committed and Candidate Projects** within the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO)'s ***Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)*** (Figure 16).

> ***Long Range Transportation Plan*** *is a long-range regional blueprint developed by Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organizaion (HRTPO), to help guide long term, multimodal transportation investments that promote system efficiency while maximizing the use of scarce transportation resources.*



PROJECT TYPE

- VDOT SYIP Highway
- VDOT SYIP Intersection
- LRTP Roadway
- LRTP Roadway Interchange
- LRTP Intermodal Freight Interchange
- Active Transportation

Figure 15: VDOT SYIP and LRTP Projects

Source: City of Norfolk; HRTPO; VDOT

The projects in Figures 14, 15, and 16 are intended to support multimodal transportation throughout the city and help mitigate congested roadways.

PROJECT ID	PROJECT NAME/ DESCRIPTION	PROJECT TYPE	VDOT SYIP	In current fiscally constrained 2045 LRTP	PROJECT COST (in Millions)
2045-50	Hampton Roads Express Lane Network	Highway Regional Priority		Yes	$993.0
2045-2	I-64 Widening Including Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel	Highway Regional Priority		Yes	$3322.0
2045-4	I-64/I-264 Interchange - Phase II	Highway Regional Priority		Yes	$32.0
2045-301	I-64/I-264 Interchange - Phase III/ IIIA	Highway Regional Priority interchange	Yes	Yes	$525.0
2045-270	St. Paul's Project - Phase II (extension of Freemason Street)	Roadway	Yes	Yes	$21.7
2045-199	Virginia Beach Blvd	Highway - Primary	Yes	Yes	$9.3
2045-199	Virginia Beach Blvd	Roadway	Yes	Yes	$15.7
2045-316	Air Terminal Interchange	Roadway Interchange	Yes	Yes	$186.9
2045-318	I-264/ Ballentine Blvd Diverging Diamond Interchange	Roadway Interchange		Yes	$10.8
2045-603	Hampton Boulevard at Terminal Boulevard	Intermodal - Freight		Yes	$210.1
2045-520	Hampton Roads Regional Transit System - 757 Express	Transit Regional Priority		Yes	$551.9
2045-504	Ferry Service Expansion Study	Transit- Maritime Transit		Yes (Study)	$22
2045-513	Southside Ferry Service Expansion Study	Transit- Maritime Transit		Yes (Study)	N/A
2045-516	High Capacity Transit Extension to Greenbrier Area Study	Transit- Fixed Guideway Transit		Yes (Study)	N/A
2045-518	Naval Station Norfolk Transit Extension	Transit- Fixed Guideway Transit		Yes (Study)	N/A
2045-707	South Hampton Roads Trail - Suffolk to Virginia Beach Oceanfront	Regional Active Transportation		Yes	$139.4
2045-708	Virginia Beach Trail (part of the regional South Hampton Roads Trail)	Regional Active Transportation		Yes (part of SHRT)	N/A
2045-732	Bike Lanes on Granby Street	Active Transportation		Yes	$0.3
2045-701	Bike Lanes on Indian River Rd	Active Transportation		N/A	N/A
2045-702	Bike Lanes on Indian River Rd	Active Transportation		N/A	N/A
2045-703	E. Little Creek Road Bike Path	Active Transportation		Yes	$0.3
2045-735	Military Highway Bike Access	Active Transportation		Yes	$7.3
2045-51	Regional Connectors Study	Planned Regional Study-Roadway		Yes (Study)	$7

Figure 16: List of 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan Projects

Source: City of Norfolk.

5. Support ***ADA accessibility*** by working to identify and remove obstacles.

> ***ADA accessibility*** *refers to the design and implementation of environments, products, and services to ensure they are usable by people with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).*

a. Connect with advocacy groups and local residents who identify as part of the disability community to understand existing challenges.

6. Align transportation infrastructure and facilities with accessible housing and community services to **enhance the integration of older adults** and people with disabilities.

7. Design streets and associated infrastructure in alignment with the City's ***Complete Streets Policy*** and develop, operate and maintain an integrated, connected network of streets that are safe and accessible for residents of all backgrounds and abilities.

> ***A Complete Streets Policy*** *ensures that streets are designed and maintained to be safe and accessible for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This approach prioritizes the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and transit riders, aiming to create inclusive, healthy, and vibrant communities.*

a. Incorporate Complete Streets principles into all plans, manuals, checklists, decision-trees, rules, regulations, and programs as appropriate.

b. Develop and maintain an inventory of sidewalks, street lanes and widths, bicycle facilities, and crosswalks.

c. Actively seek funds necessary for improvements in the right-of-way in support of this policy.

d. Develop a process to involve the private sector in implementing complete streets infrastructure.

e. Survey residents of varying ages and abilities to understand challenges in the current system.

8. Improve sidewalk conditions and connections between residential areas and public spaces, major corridors, schools, medical facilities, parks, and transit stops.

9. Support the implementation of the **Citywide Trails Master Plan** to enhance connectivity, walkability, and access across the city.



Elizabeth River Trail (City of Norfolk)

10. Develop ***greenways*** and link additional trails and pathways to the Elizabeth River Trail to create a complete system.

Greenways are linear parks or corridors designed for recreational use and non-motorized transportation, such as walking, biking, and jogging. They often connect natural areas, parks, and urban spaces, providing safe, scenic routes that promote environmental conservation and enhance community well-being.

11. Connect meaningful and accessible destinations, including parks, schools, employers, shopping, hospitals, trails, to cultural and economic hubs, such as the Norfolk International Airport, Port of Virginia, Virginia Zoo, and Botanical Gardens.

BEST PRACTICES:

THE CULTURAL TRAIL, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

The Indianapolis Cultural Trail is an 8-mile urban bike and pedestrian path in downtown Indianapolis, Indiana. The Trail seamlessly connects neighborhoods, cultural districts and entertainment amenities while serving as the downtown hub for central Indiana's vast greenway system.



(Michelle Craig)

12. Seek funding to **actively reverse historical injustices** caused by highway and other infrastructure that divided neighborhoods and reconnect these areas.

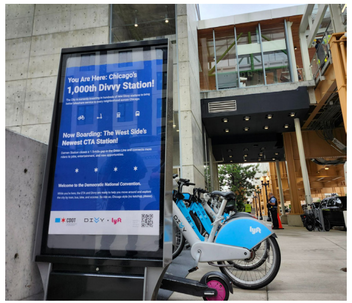
13. Use ***micro transit*** to fill in the gaps in the transit system and ensure access to bike and scooter-sharing options is equitable throughout the city.

Micro transit is a flexible transportation service that uses small, multi-passenger vehicles to provide on-demand or scheduled rides. Unlike traditional public transit with fixed routes, microtransit adjusts its routes and schedules based on real-time demand, offering a more personalized and efficient travel option.

BEST PRACTICES:

CHICAGO DIVVY FOR THE ENTIRE CITY, CHICAGO, IL

The City of Chicago negotiated with Lyft, the owner of the bikeshare system Divvy, to ensure equitable micro transit access for all residents. The contract has established stations in all 50 Wards, expanded the system with e-bikes, and created affordable options for residents on limited incomes.

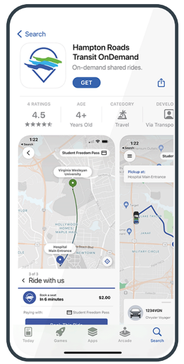


(David Powe)

LOCAL SUCCESS:

HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT, ONDEMAND RIDESHARE SERVICE

HRT operates its OnDemand rideshare service, currently available in Newport News and Virginia Beach, which provides flexible, on-demand trips in areas with limited fixed-route service, such as HRT buses and The Tide light rail. OnDemand helps significantly with the first or last leg of a trip, before or after using a fixed transit route.



(Via)

14. Continue to explore the feasibility of **reusing former rail lines** and former or underutilized rights-of-way for trails and connections.

15. Identify and analyze Norfolk's **historic bridge** connections and determine whether to restore them in order to support multimodal travel and reconnect neighborhoods.

16. Explore opportunities to integrate emerging transportation technologies to help bridge gaps in the transportation network and improve accessibility.



Brambleton Bridge (City of Norfolk)

GOAL 4:

Protect and Enhance Transportation and Utility Infrastructure

Build, expand, and maintain public utilities and infrastructure to support the cultural and economic needs of a diverse and growing city. Ensure resilience across modes of travel and movement of goods, to smooth potential future shocks and stresses.

Norfolk's mobility and utility networks must be robust and adaptable to withstand future challenges. In anticipation of potential future risks, we can plan and build a comprehensive network to accommodate all modes of travel while prioritizing resilience and efficiency.

Infrastructure development should respond to and anticipate the needs of our residents and businesses, today and through 2050. Utilities like clean drinking water, efficient electricity, and fast broadband internet provide critical services to all stakeholders, no matter where they live and work. These utility systems should be supported, expanded, and maintained where the City of Norfolk needs them most.

1. Raise and reinforce critical access roads and evacuation routes, as determined by the Department of Transportation, Department of Public Works, Office of Resilience, and Department of Emergency Management.

2. Create a flood street network map highlighting streets that are more resilient and less prone to flooding; identify gaps of access in the map and potential mitigation strategies.

3. Develop a strategic plan for **flood mitigation improvements at key underpasses.**



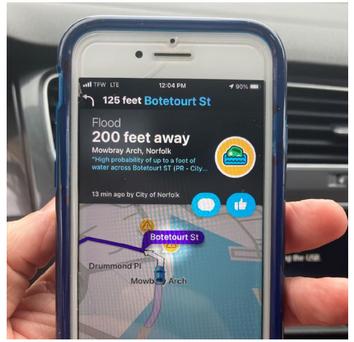
(WRT)

4. Use technology and signage to provide residents and drivers with information about **alternative modes of transportation during extreme weather events,** train-crossing events, bridge lifts, and other frequently recurring incidents; indicate where crossing may not be possible using alternative modes during flood events.

LOCAL SUCCESS:

FLOODMAPP INTEGRATION WITH WAZE IN NORFOLK, VA

Funded as a winner of the RISE Urban Mobility Resilience Challenge, FloodMapp launched a forecast flooding technology integration with the Waze app. Tidal, riverine, and rainfall data are layered in a geographic information system and sent to Waze users in real time.



5. Integrate flooding risks into transportation asset life cycle and/or transportation project planning processes.

6. Continue to provide **quality public utility services** that meet current and future needs of residents and businesses.

a. Continue the implementation of the long-term infrastructure improvement plan to ensure regular maintenance and improvement of utilities.

b. Coordinate with utility partners to maintain infrastructure and evaluate future requirements.

c. Monitor services such as the drinking water system, electricity, natural gas, and communications systems to ensure reliable output that serves the city.

d. Continue support of Hampton Roads Sanitation District improvements to the wastewater collection and treatment system and monitor for safety.



Moore's Bridges Water Treatment Facility (City of Norfolk)

7. Support the implementation of the City's **Electric Vehicle Charging Plan.**

a. Use the Highest Scoring Block Groups: Level 2 and DCFC Maps to implement charging infrastructure in areas of highest need.

b. Electrify the City's fleet of vehicles.

c. Establish partnerships for EV charging at municipal sites.

d. Promote EV charging at workplaces and multi-family homes.

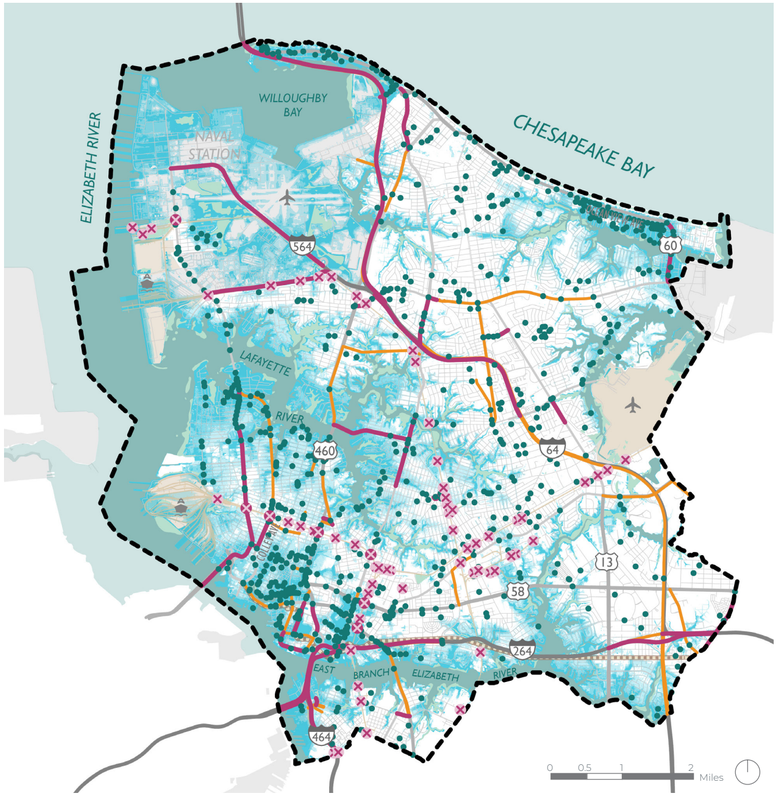


Figure 17: Infrastructure and flooding barriers to transportation systems

Source: City of Norfolk; JLUS; NOAA; Federal Railroad Administration; Virginia DOT

e. Streamline or modify permitting and zoning regulations to encourage and incentivize local investment, continuing to build and expand the city's EV charging network.

f. Assess EV charging in high-risk flood areas for reliability and redundancy.

g. Integrate EV charging with renewable energy and energy storage.

h. Install EV chargers on evacuation routes and integrate EV charging into City emergency communications protocols.

i. Establish guidance for ROW charging.



EV Charging (WRT)

8. Expand broadband access, reliability, and speed to bridge Norfolk's remaining digital divide in households and community hubs.

a. Leverage opportunities to connect new infrastructure to the ***Southside Fiber Ring***.

> ***Southside Fiber Ring:*** *is a 119-mile, 288-strand fiber-optic backbone network developed by the Southside Network Authority (SNA), a regional partnership formed in 2019 by the cities of Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach in Virginia. Its primary goal is to enhance internet connectivity across the Southside Hampton Roads region by providing an open-access infrastructure that fosters competition among internet service providers (ISPs), thereby improving service quality and affordability for residents and businesses.*

b. Create and expand strong public hotspots in public facilities, such as parks, schools, and libraries.

c. Increase public awareness of hotspot coverage through PSA campaigns and GIS mapping.

BEST PRACTICES:

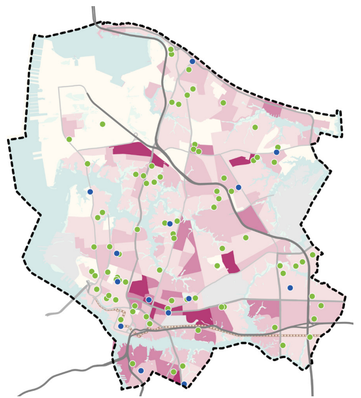
LINKNYC, NEW YORK CITY NY

The City of New York successfully expanded broadband access in underserved communities with kiosks in public areas providing Wi-Fi, charging stations, emergency services, and public address.



LinkNYC (CNN)

d. Raise awareness of existing broadband assistance programs and support the expansion of new programs.



POPULATION WITHOUT INTERNET ACCESS

- No Data
- 1%-10%
- 11%-20%
- 21-30%
- >30%

ASSETS

- Library
- School

e. Create a "dig-once" policy to promote the installation of conduit for carrying fiber optic cable whenever trenches are opened, or during road work or capital construction.

9. Work with broadband providers to ensure that i**nfrastructure will be sufficient** to meet future needs of residents and businesses through 2050.

10. In areas of low flood risk, identify and implement opportunities to **bury overhead infrastructure.**



Park Place Library Branch (City of Norfolk)

GOAL 5:

Support Regional, National, and International Connections

Strengthen the regional transportation system to reduce dependence on car travel through efficient and reliable alternatives.

Norfolk's regional transit system should provide efficient, reliable, and accessible alternatives to cars. Enhancing the transportation network, supporting high-capacity transit, and ensuring seamless transitions between modes can help us create a resilient and connected Hampton Roads for Norfolk and all our neighbors.

1. Continue to study and advocate for implementation of ***high-capacity transit*** expansions connecting Norfolk to the larger region.



Norfolk Amtrak Station (City of Norfolk)

2. Advocate for the completion of a holistic **regional transportation network** (sidewalks, bike paths, trails, complete streets, transit stops, etc.) to enhance redundancy and resilience across the region.

3. Support the **expansion of passenger rail service** and intercity bus service between Norfolk to both in-state and out-of-state locations.

4. Support efforts (e.g., HRTPO's Regional Connectors Study) to study and construct regional infrastructure that **connects the Peninsula to the Southside**, improving congestion relief, economic vitality, resiliency, accessibility, and quality of life.

5. Support the **Norfolk International Airport's master planning efforts**, while also working to protect the surrounding natural environment and adjacent communities.

6. Support the Virginia Port Authority's master planning efforts for Norfolk International Terminals, while also working to ensure that the overall impacts of **port operations on adjacent communities** are mitigated.

7. Support the implementation and advancement of **regional Committed and Candidate Projects** that impact Norfolk within the LRTP, the state Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP), and Regional Priority Projects within the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC)'s six-year funding program.

8. Enhance existing ***mobility hubs*** (e.g., Downtown Transit Center) and implement new hubs to improve connectivity, focusing on accessibility and functionality, ensuring that they are designed to accommodate future mobility needs and technologies as they emerge.

> ***Mobility hubs:*** *Centralized locations that integrate various transportation options, such as public transit, bike-sharing, car-sharing, and rideshare services, to provide seamless and efficient travel connections. These hubs aim to enhance accessibility, reduce reliance on private vehicles, and promote sustainable urban mobility.*

9. Advocate for a cohesive **wayfinding and signage system** across all modes of regional travel (e.g., Amtrak, public transit, and trails).



(City of Norfolk)

10. Continue to support the use of ***Transportation Demand Management*** strategies and programs, such as ridesharing, telecommuting, and staggered work hours, to increase the efficiency of existing regional transportation systems.

11. Support efforts to study and conceptualize an **Unmanned Autonomous Systems (UxS) route**/ corridor network within Norfolk and the greater region to improve the transport of goods, services, and travelers, utilizing air, ground, and maritime unmanned systems.

12. Identify and evaluate new funding opportunities and support updates to funding mechanisms that **encourage and incentivize regional public transit.**

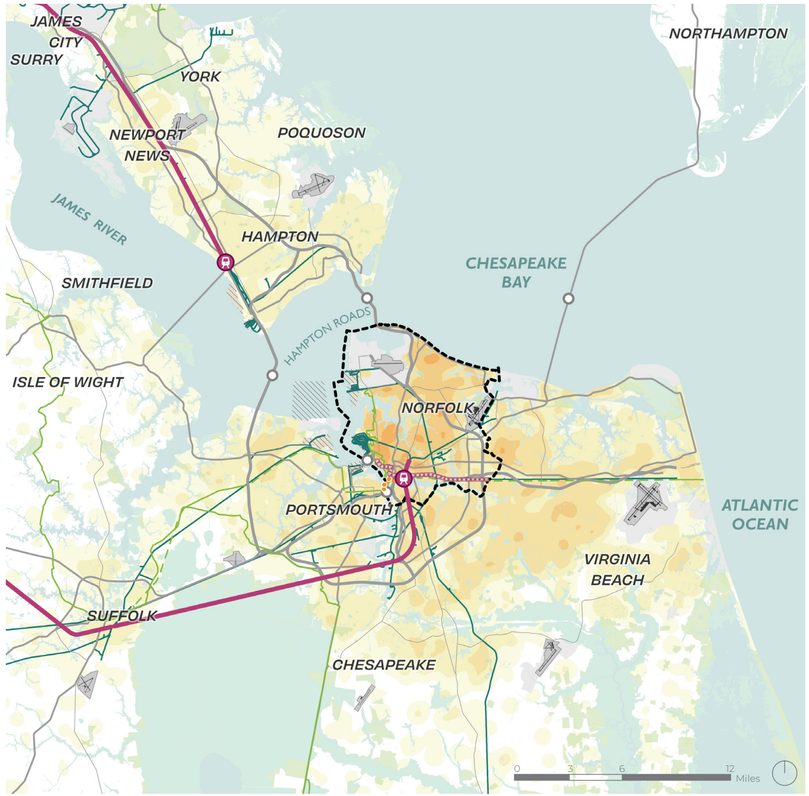


Figure 18: Hampton Roads regional connectivity

Source: City of Norfolk; US Census Bureau, On the Map, 2021; ESRI; ARUP

MOBILITY

- Rail
- Amtrak routes
- Amtrak stations
- Interstate
- US Route
- State route
- Tunnel
- Port Facility
- Airport Runway
- Existing Regional Trail
- Proposed Regional Trail
- Ferry Line
- Ferry Terminal

WORKERS COMMUTING TO JOBS IN NORFOLK

- 0-69
- 70-249
- 250-549
- 550-989
- >990
- City limits
- Military
- Seaport/Airport
- Light rail
- Water
- Wetlands

Connecting the City: Putting Actions in Place

Becoming a truly connected city means stitching together Norfolk's full range of transportation and infrastructure investments—from expanding light rail and bus service to building safe, accessible sidewalks, trails, and bike networks. These improvements are not just about mobility, but also equity, access, and resilience. Prioritizing multimodal centers and mixed-use corridors ensures that more residents live near daily essentials, with safe, sustainable options to move through the city and region.

This requires a coordinated push to align flood mitigation with transit upgrades, revive key bridge and trail connections, reimagine public space at multimodal hubs, and prioritize underserved neighborhoods. Norfolk has the tools and momentum to connect our communities and support a stronger, more inclusive region.



(City of Norfolk)

Where in the city could these ideas go?

Implement **safer crossings** at high volume intersections **2.1**

Expand high-capacity mass transit within the city to major nodes like the naval base and Military Circle area **3.1**

Develop **flood mitigation improvements** for **key underpasses** **4.3**

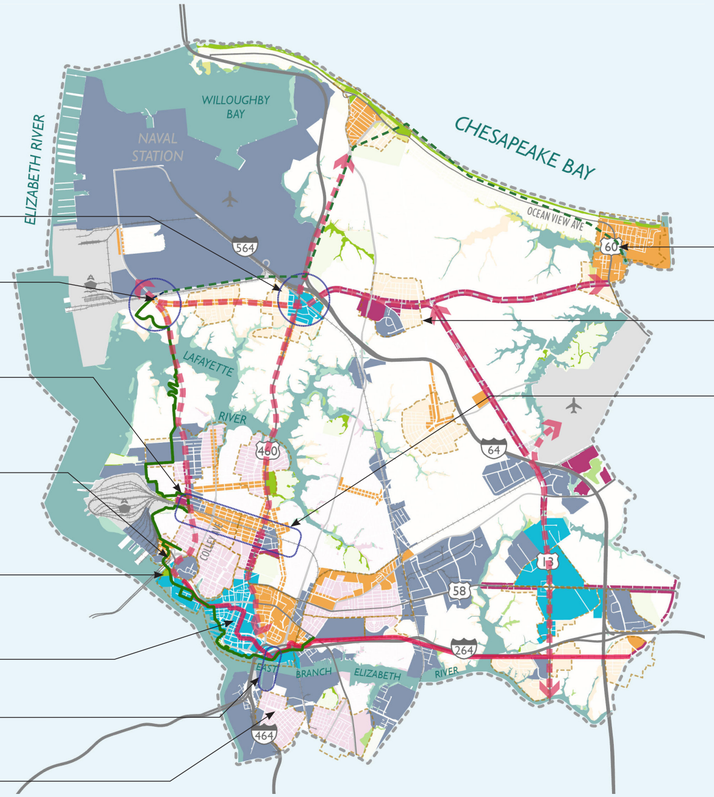
Establish a **curb space management program** that considers pedestrian and transit mobility, access for goods, amenities and storage **1.9**

Support **access to major entry points** at key destinations by creating clearly marked and inviting entry points, landmarks, and welcome and directional signage **1.6**

Explore **car-free zones** in busy commercial areas **1.5**

Analyze **historic bridge connections for potential to be restored** to support multi modal travel and reconnect neighborhoods **3.15**

Expand broadband access in households and community hubs **4.8**



Develop greenways and link **additional trails** and pathways to the Elizabeth River Trail to create a complete system **3.10**

Promote, encourage and incentivize **Transit-Oriented Development** **1.1**

Raise and reinforce **critical access roads** and evacuation routes **4.1**

OVERLAYS

- Multimodal centers
- Elizabeth River Trail
- Potential bike route
- Existing Light Rail
- Potential high-capacity transit connections

PLACE TYPES

- Community Mixed-Use
- Corridor Mixed-Use
- Innovation and Production
- Regional Activity Center
- Sustain - Coastal
- Sustain - Suburban
- Sustain - Traditional
- Transportation and Logistics
- Open Space
- Conservation

Figure 19: Connecting the City: Putting Actions in Place

Where and how to enact our Plan Actions has yet to be determined, but here are some ideas of prototypical places in the city they could be sited.

Source: City of Norfolk

05 Building to 2050 and Beyond

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

With all the ideas in the Future Land Use Plan and in the Plan Goals, Actions, and Strategies, we can take a step back to see how all those parts and pieces come together into a whole, laying the groundwork to build the Future Vision into real change for Norfolk's communities. With a strong implementation roadmap, we will work collaboratively with partners to ensure our ideas can become reality, with the potential to transform our neighborhoods and our city to benefit all who live here.



(City of Norfolk)

Implementing the Plan

Planning to Action

NFK2050 contains hundreds of actions and strategies to achieve the goals under each Pillar, as well as the overall vision of the Plan. These actions and strategies, built upon a foundation of extensive community engagement, provide guidance for City staff, external partners and agencies, local businesses, the development community, and the public to use as Norfolk continues to grow and thrive over the next 25 years.

A variety of tools can be used to implement the Plan – most notably, the Zoning Ordinance, the Capital Improvement Plan, and Subdivision Regulations, all of which should be developed or amended using NFK2050's guidance.

Over time, zoning and development regulations should become fully consistent with the actions and recommendations of NFK2050, as they are primary tools used to implement the vision, goals, and actions defined by any Comprehensive Plan.

For Norfolk to succeed and thrive, collaboration between City departments and partnerships between City government and external groups must be built and sustained to fully realize the vision and goals of the Plan. NFK2050 should be used by City departments to help develop internal work plans and budget requests, as well as support grant applications that are consistent with the goals and actions of the Plan. External groups can also use NFK2050 to support their own efforts to align with the vision and goals of the Plan.

Although NFK2050 guides land use policy and growth within Norfolk city boundaries, in reality these planning issues transcend jurisdictions. Frequent and collaborative consultation with our neighboring cities will be crucial to enhance the quality of life of all residents and stakeholders who live, work, and play across city lines.

BEST PRACTICES:

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (UDO), CHARLOTTE, NC

An emerging implementation tool Norfolk may consider is a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), which merges various land use and development regulations into one – typically the zoning, subdivision, and stormwater ordinances – to create clearer and simpler land use regulations and review processes.

Charlotte, NC's UDO was adopted in 2022 as a mechanism to enact the vision of Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan policies. Charlotte combined 8 different land development ordinances, including the Zoning Ordinance, into one clear, illustrated, public-facing document.

* For the full Implementation Matrix, including all the NFK2050 Goals, Actions, and Strategies, please see Appendix III.

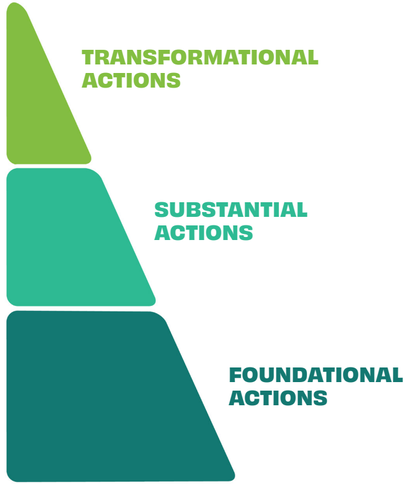
Implementation Approach

Comprehensive Plans are a complex and multidimensional endeavor. Bringing these ideas to action will involve a wide range of partners and strategies. Additionally, the expansive scope of Comprehensive Plans can make them difficult to organize and execute; typically, an implementation matrix is used to keep all the goals and actions in one place and to help identify action types, time frames, and responsible departments or agencies.

NFK2050 utilizes an Implementation Matrix and includes a category called **Scale of Impact** to acknowledge the level of impact each action will have in achieving the overall Plan goals and how they can build on one another to achieve a truly transformative, long-term impact in the city.

SCALE OF IMPACT

- **Transformational:** Long-term, and as the name suggests, transformational actions that define the community's vision for 2050. Achieving these will often require a foundation of both Foundational and Substantial actions.
- **Substantial:** Actions that significantly contribute to achieving the 2050 vision. While some may require preliminary Foundational actions, they are generally implemented within a medium-term timeframe.
- **Foundational:** Actions based on existing City efforts that should be expanded or continued. It also includes short-term and ongoing low-cost actions that lay the groundwork for Substantial and Transformational actions.



Evaluating Alignment

Zoning and Land Use Applications:

Zoning and related land use ordinances are the City's primary tools to implement NFK2050. Therefore, it is important for zoning and land use applications submitted to the City to be evaluated against NFK2050 to ensure consistency with its goals and actions.

The Department of City Planning and the City Planning Commission will follow the guidance of NFK2050 when reviewing new applications and in decision-making, or entitlement, processes, such as rezonings, Conditional Use Permits (CUPs), etc. Staff will also work towards the elimination of zoning non-conformities whenever development applications go through discretionary approval processes: these applications should meet the goals of the Pillars in NFK2050.

During the review of these applications, City Planning staff will utilize an evaluation report like the one opposite, taking into consideration the following elements:

FUTURE LAND USE MAP AND PLACE TYPE CONSISTENCY:

- Primary and Secondary Uses
- Character and Mobility guidance
- General Considerations (e.g., how the project complements the existing character of the area, how ground floors activate the street, how multimodal access is incorporated (pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, etc.).
- Form, massing, and density of a project and how they fit within the associated Place Type.

PLAN PILLARS, GOALS, ACTIONS, AND STRATEGIES:

Projects might not address all of NFK2050's Pillars, goals, actions, and strategies; however, these provide context for the way City Planning staff will evaluate new projects or requests. Projects may also meet some goals, actions, and strategies but fall short or, in some cases, directly oppose others. Staff will utilize all relevant goals, actions, and strategies when evaluating proposals and suggest improvements, if necessary, to better align with NFK2050.

ADOPTED PLANS AND POLICIES:

City Planning staff will also consult applicable plans and policies that are adopted into NFK2050 for guidance (e.g., Vision2100, Green Infrastructure Plan, Complete Streets Policy, etc.). Community plans applicable to the location of the proposed development will also be used; see p.259 of this chapter for all adopted plans and policies.

Other City departments are encouraged to adopt a similar approach for projects within their respective work programs and budgets, and when submitting materials for approval in the annual Capital Improvement Plan. External groups are also encouraged to use a similar framework to ensure their own projects and initiatives are consistent with NFK2050.

SAMPLE PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT BASED ON NFK2050 GUIDANCE:

NFK 2050

NFK2050 Evaluation Report

	Conditional Zoning	Project Type	Character District
Request	REZONING MF-NS (Multi-Family Neighborhood-Scale) to C-C (Community-Commercial)	Restaurant with a drive-through	Traditional

Alignment with NFK2050: Future Land Use Plan	
Place Type	Corridor Mixed Use
Land Use	The proposed commercial use is considered a Primary Use in Corridor Mixed Use and is therefore consistent; however, the drive-through requires a Conditional Use Permit.
Character	**OVERVIEW:** Corridor Mixed Use places are characterized by medium to higher density mixed use development in a walkable, urban environment. Active street presences are encouraged, as are pedestrian-friendly streetscapes. **ASSESSMENT:** •The proposed development is suburban in nature, with a one-story restaurant set back from the street with a drive-through located between the building and the street. To be more consistent with the Corridor Mixed Use place type, the proposed building should be moved up to the street to create an active street presence and should include an active storefront with functional street-level entrances. •The Future Land Use character guidance can be applied during the rezoning and Conditional Use Permit process to ensure the development meets the intent of the Corridor Mixed Use place type. The Commercial and Mixed-Use Pattern Book should also be consulted to further enhance the form and character of the building, ensuring it fits within the Traditional Character District.
Mobility	**OVERVIEW:** Corridor Mixed Use place types have a strong focus on walkability and bikeability and these areas should connect residents to services, commercial areas, and employment opportunities. Streetscape improvements should prioritize pedestrian safety. **ASSESSMENT:** •While the restaurant use is generally appropriate within this place type, site improvements should be made to align with the mobility guidance. To be more consistent with the Corridor Mixed Use place type, the drive-through should be relocated to the rear of the building and appropriately buffered from view. Pedestrian connections should be made from the sidewalk to the building entrance to enhance safety and walkability for patrons and employees. Bike racks and other infrastructure should also be included to further the intent of the place type as one focused on multimodal access.

Alignment with NFK2050: Plan Pillars		
Pillar:	**Relevant Goals:**	**Consistency:**
Celebrating Our Community	Goal 2: Support Complete and Healthy Neighborhoods	- Development should include more pedestrian, bicycle, and streetscape improvements (landscaping, outdoor seating, etc. - Development should be altered to better fit with the Corridor Mixed Use Place Type - form, character, mobility, etc.
Embracing Nature	Goal 2: Build and Maintain a Network of Green and Blue Infrastructure	+ Preserves or increases tree canopy
Connecting the City	Goal 1: Enhance Multi-Modal Transportation throughout the City	- Addition of bicycle infrastructure or amenities needed (bike racks, etc.), as site is along a strategic bicycle corridor
	Goal 3: Improve Intracity Travel and Connections	+ New sidewalks are included that improve access from the neighborhood to the development
	Goal 4: Protect and Enhance Transportation and Utility Infrastructure	+ EV charging stations are included in the development

+ *project element positively contributes to NFK2050 Goal*
- *project needs adjustments to meet this NFK2050 Goal*

ALIGNMENT WITH NFK2050: Y: ☐ Y WITH ADJUSTMENTS: ☒ N: ☐

Staff finds the project generally in alignment with NFK2050 Future Land Use and Pillar guidance, and is subject to approval with the suggested alterations.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

NFK2050 provides a citywide vision for future growth, change, and development. Sometimes, a more focused strategy is required to address the unique cultural, historical, social, economic, or physical factors within an individual community. **Community plans** offer a chance to explore these specifics in depth, creating tailored recommendations that best meet the needs of local residents, business owners, and visitors in these areas.

When considering the need for a new community plan or study, the following guidance should be used when determining the location of the study area:

- The Future Land Use Map, prioritizing the Planning Focus Areas followed by areas within and around the Community Mixed Use and Corridor Mixed Use Place Types.
- Whether an area is impacted by a significant capital or infrastructure project or expansion of a facility.
- Whether an area is experiencing development interests that are different from the prevalent development pattern.



(WRT)

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE ADOPTED AS PART OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

All documents listed are hosted on the NFK2050 website.

CITYWIDE PLANS AND POLICIES:

- A Green Infrastructure Plan for Norfolk (2018)*
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Strategic Plan (2015)*
- City of Norfolk Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Program Supplement (2003)*
- Complete Streets Policy (2016)*
- Sand Management Plan (2016)*
- Vision2100 (2016)*

PATTERN BOOKS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- A Pattern Book for Norfolk Neighborhoods (2003)*
- Coastal Character District Pattern Book (2017)*
- Commercial and Mixed-Use Pattern Book (2018)*
- Design Principles for Multifamily Development (2020)*
- Missing Middle Pattern Book (2021)*
- The Broad Creek Refresh: A Pattern Book (2021)*
- Traditional Neighborhoods Plan Book (2016)*

COMMUNITY PLANS:

- A Strategic Plan for Southside (2004)*
- A Vision for the Next Decade: Downtown Norfolk 2030 (2020)*
- A Vision for Wards Corner: Urban Development Area Plan (2019)*
- Broad Creek Refresh Plan: Building a Community of Choice (2021)*
- Central Hampton Boulevard Area Plan (2010)*
- City of Norfolk Midtown Plan (2022)*
- Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor (2006)*
- Fairmount Park Neighborhood Revitalization Implementation Plan (2004)*
- Greater Wards Corner Comprehensive Plan (2004)*
- Military Circle/Military Highway Urban Development Area: A Vision for the Future (2017)*

** indicates a plan or policy that was adopted into plaNorfolk2030 and is carried forward into NFK2050.*

The following documents are not adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan but serve as valuable references for the implementation of NFK2050:

CITYWIDE PLANS AND POLICIES:

- An Inclusive Economic Development Strategy for the City of Norfolk (2019)
- Climate Action Plan (2019)
- Electric Vehicle Charging Plan (2024)
- Multimodal Transportation Master Plan (2022)
- Norfolk Comprehensive Housing Study and Strategic Plan (2023)
- Norfolk Resilience Strategy (2015)
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan Assessment (2022)
- Stormwater Design and Construction Manual (2024)

PATTERN BOOKS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- Elevating Homes Pattern Book (2023)
- Local Historic District Guidelines (2012)
- Norfolk Outdoor Spaces Guidelines (2023)

REGIONAL PLANS AND STUDIES:

- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Hampton Roads (2022)
- Hampton Roads Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)
- Hampton Roads Joint Land Use Study (2005)
- Long-Range Transportation Plan (HRTPO)
- Norfolk and Virginia Beach Joint Land Use Study (2019)
- Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan (2021)

Measuring Success

ONGOING REVIEWS

The policies and recommendations outlined in NFK2050 serve as a practical framework for tracking the Plan's progress. Each year, city staff should convene to identify which actions to prioritize in the coming year to advance the overall goals of each Pillar. This team of city staff ("champions" or "doers") should be dedicated to assisting with the implementation of NFK2050. Simultaneously, the team should reflect on the previous year's efforts to assess achievements and identify areas needing further attention. This annual review process will provide the flexibility to adjust priorities based on budget cycles and limitations and evolving community needs.

Per the Code of Virginia (§ 15.2-2230), the Comprehensive Plan must also be reviewed at least every five years to determine if there is a need for any of the following types of amendments:

- Adjustments to specific goals, actions, or metrics.
- Updates to entire chapters/Pillars or added sections or topics.
- Preparation of a new Plan.

METRICS

Implementation is an iterative process that requires ongoing monitoring, review, and adjustment as conditions change, and it's important to develop metrics, or performance measures, that demonstrate both the progress in achieving the Plan goals while also accounting for the uncertainties of the future.

The metrics in NFK2050 are not tied to specific goals or actions in the Plan, which are often influenced by factors and trends outside of the City's control, but rather are benchmarks to measure how the city is meeting the vision of each Pillar. This approach will help determine how effectively plan implementation is turning each Pillar's community aspirations into reality.

REPORTING

At least every two years, City Planning staff should create a NFK2050 Implementation Report to evaluate the data defined in the metrics, including an outline of the obstacles to plan implementation, and recommendations for new or modified actions, strategies, or metrics. The Report should be posted on the NFK2050 website and be presented to the City Planning Commission and City Council. The Report may also include a summary of any other activities undertaken by City departments to advance any of the goals outlined in the Pillars but may not be specifically mentioned in the Plan's actions. Ultimately, the Report will help communicate implementation progress with elected bodies, other City departments, and the general public.

Celebrating Our Community

METRIC	DESIRED TREND	BASELINE STATISTIC	BASELINE YEAR	DATA SOURCE
# of public art installations	Increase	149	2022	Public Art
# of active neighborhood identification signs	Increase	145	2025	Neighborhood Services
# of surveyed resources	Increase	7,844	2025	City Planning
# of designated historic resources and districts	Increase	66	2025	City Planning
# of documented trails connecting to historical points of interest	Increase	2	2025	Parks and Recreation, City Planning
# of pattern books, plan books, and design guidelines	Increase	11	2025	City Planning
Acres of public parks and open spaces	Increase	1,302	2024	Parks and Recreation
Park Score ranking	Increase	53	2025	Trust for Public Land
Walk Score	Increase	46	2025	WalkScore
% population living within a 10-minute walk of a park	Increase	78	2025	Trust for Public Land
# of public recreation amenities	Increase	1,369	2022	Parks and Recreation
# of people with low access to healthy food (within 1 mile)	Decrease	76,784	2019	County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, Public Health
Premature mortality rate (death rate of residents under age 75)	Decrease	11,600	2025	County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, Public Health

Growing Equitably

METRIC	DESIRED TREND	BASELINE STATISTIC	BASELINE YEAR	DATA SOURCE
% population in labor force	Increase	70.2	2023	Census Data DP03 (ACS 2023)
% unemployment rate	Decrease	6.1	2023	Census Data S2301 (ACS 2023)
% population below poverty level	Decrease	17.3	2023	Census Data S1701 (ACS 2023)
% population with a high school diploma or equivalent	Increase	33.5	2023	Census Data S1501 (ACS 2023)
% population with a bachelor's degree or higher	Increase	20.4	2023	Census Data S1501 (ACS 2023)
Median income ($)	Increase	62,382	2023	Census Data S1901 (ACS 2023)
% population that is cost burdened (housing cost ≥ 30% of income)	Decrease	37	2021	Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
% population in poverty that is housing cost burdened	Decrease	18	2021	HUD
# of census tracts with a high poverty rate (20% or more)	Decrease	43	2023	Census Data S1701 (ACS 2023)
% homes occupied by homeowner	Increase	45.7	2023	Census Data DP04 (ACS 2023)
Total housing units	Increase	102,542	2023	Census Data DP04 (ACS 2023)
# of building permits issued for new housing units (total)	Increase	499	2024	2024 CPC Annual Report
# of building permits issued for new middle housing units (2-12 units)	Increase	52	2024	2024 CPC Annual Report
Acres of brownfields remediated or under remediation on publicly owned sites	Increase	39	2025	Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ)

Embracing Nature

METRIC	DESIRED TREND	BASELINE STATISTIC	BASELINE YEAR	DATA SOURCE
Acres of wetlands restored (tidal and freshwater)	Increase	25.05	2025	Resilience
# of impaired waterbodies	Decrease	22	2024	VDEQ
# of city-owned trees installed	Increase	93,732	2025	Parks & Recreation, Parks & Forestry Operations
% overall tree canopy	Increase	21.89	2025	i-Tree
Acres of vegetation area	Increase	17,787.8	2025	Trees at Work
Tree Equity Score	Increase	84	2025	American Forests
# of major flood reduction infrastructure projects completed	Increase	18	2025	Stormwater, Resilience
Site energy use in municipal buildings (units)	Decrease	86,212.5	2024	General Services, Civic Lab
Energy burden (% of gross household income spent on energy costs)	Decrease	3	2025	US Department of Energy
% total impervious area	Decrease	49	2025	NatureQuant
Urban Heat Index (average)	Decrease	4	2025	NatureQuant

Connecting the City

METRIC	DESIRED TREND	BASELINE STATISTIC	BASELINE YEAR	DATA SOURCE
# of traffic fatalities and severe injuries on city roads	Decrease	151	2024	Virginia Department of Transportation
Miles of dedicated bike lanes	Increase	29.6	2025	Transportation
Miles of sidewalks	Increase	919.1	2025	Transportation
Miles of high-capacity mass transit	Increase	7.4	2025	Hampton Roads Transit (HRT)
Miles of high-frequency bus routes	Increase	9.36	2025	HRT
Transit ridership	Increase	3,724,738	2024	HRT
Bicycle trip counts on city roads	Increase	67,098	2024	Transportation
Elizabeth River Trail (ERT) bicycle and pedestrian count	Increase	201,772	2024	ERT
Transit Score	Increase	36	2025	Walk Score
Bike Score	Increase	47	2025	Walk Score
% population living within ½ mile of a high-frequency transit stop	Increase	17.2	2023	HRT, Census
% jobs within ½ mile of a high-frequency transit stop	Increase	52.3	2023	HRT, Census
% network miles outside of recurrent flood zones	Increase	43.4	2025	Transportation, City Planning
# of Norfolk residents who bike, walk, carpool, or take transit to work	Increase	22,459	2023	Census Data B08006 (ACS 2023)
# of shelters installed at bus stops	Increase	137	2025	HRT
# of households with broadband access	Increase	83,456	2023	Census Data S2801 (ACS 2023)
# of blocked railroad crossing incident reports	Decrease	1,028	2024	Federal Railroad Administration
# of bicycle racks at public facilities	Increase	182	2025	Transportation
# of e-scooter/ e-bicycle corrals	Increase	23	2025	Transportation
# of electric vehicle charging stations	Increase	55	2025	CivicLab, Transportation

Norfolk By 2050

When we look at how to cross-reference our most transformational Goals and Actions (Ch. 4) with the specific place types on our Future Land Use Map (Ch. 3), we can understand what kind of development and infrastructure we need to build where.

The central idea of NFK2050's land use is that **future growth should be targeted in lower-risk, higher-ground areas of the city** that are or will be well-connected to transit or other modes of transportation. These are the areas to focus development strategies ranging from "gentle density" to mixed-use walkable development and community gathering places. **More housing for all ends of the income spectrum is needed citywide, but we should be thoughtful to add that housing primarily in places that will be safer from climate risks.**

Meanwhile, the **higher-risk areas of the city will need increasing protection** from rising floodwaters. This protective infrastructure is likely to cost the city, as all large projects do; however, it is imperative to protect our people, particularly our most vulnerable neighbors. Small- and large-scale mobility projects also need to be developed in tandem to better connect all corners of our city.

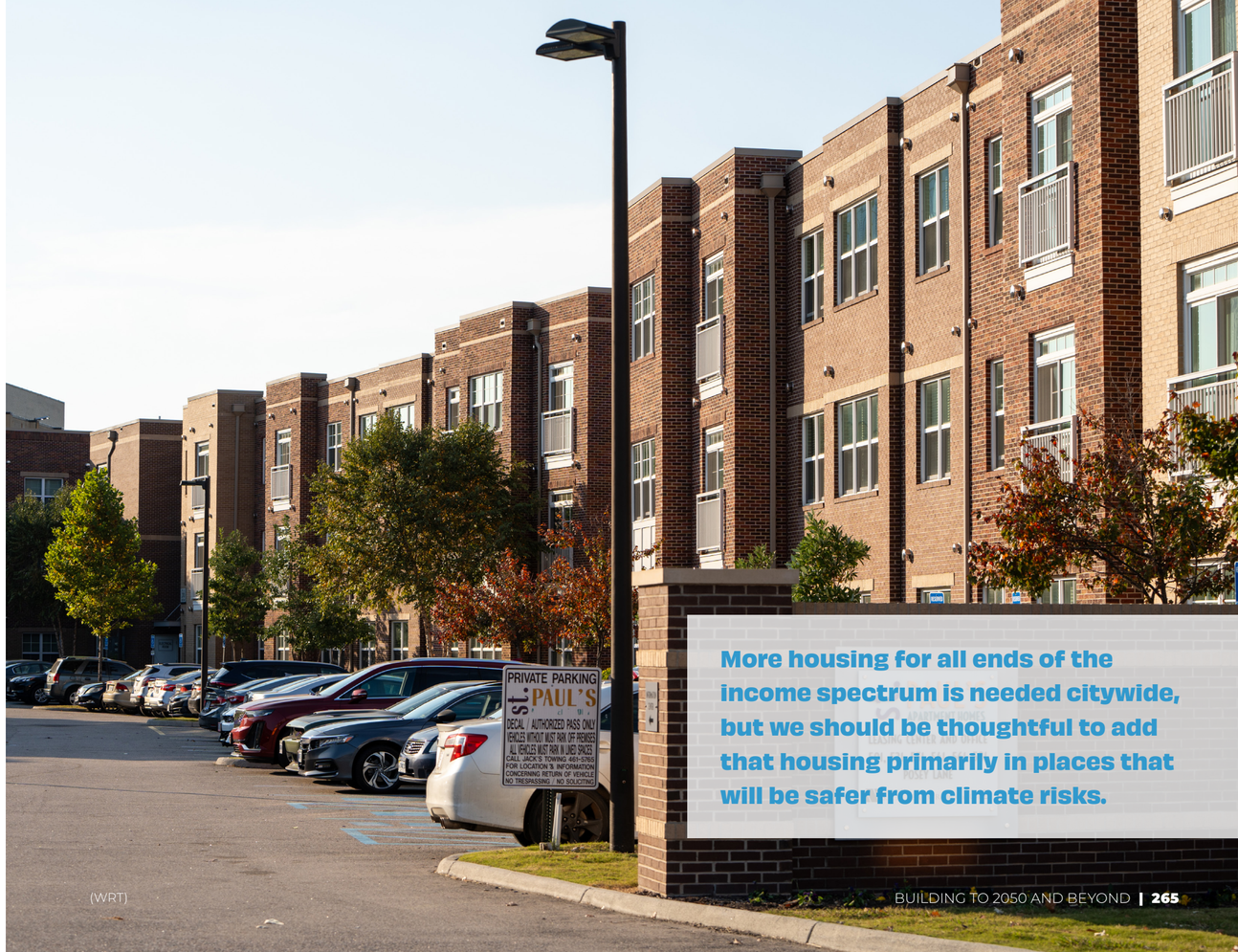
Broadly speaking, costs for infrastructure are generally offset through policy to do the following:

- Increase the incomes of our current residents;
- Improve the property value of existing owners; or
- Add new residents and their ensuing property taxes.

Ideally we employ all three strategies, without compromising the unique character of Norfolk's neighborhoods.

As we plan for the city's growth, development must be guided by environmental realities and strategic investment. Topography, sea level rise, and the distribution of existing and future assets form the foundation for determining where and how we grow.





More housing for all ends of the income spectrum is needed citywide, but we should be thoughtful to add that housing primarily in places that will be safer from climate risks.

(WRT)

PROJECTING GROWTH

Vision 2100 outlines a long-term framework that designates areas with relatively low flood risk as **Neighborhoods of the Future** and **New Urban Centers.** These zones, anchored around existing high-value assets, are envisioned as hubs for redevelopment into vibrant, transit-oriented communities that can accommodate population growth while minimizing climate vulnerability.

Building on this foundation, NFK2050's Future Land Use Plan envisions how that growth could take shape by prioritizing policies that:

- Increase housing production at different densities.
- Direct development away from flood-prone areas.
- Transform vacant and underutilized parcels into productive, resilient land uses.
- Double down on transit-oriented development.
- Reconnect historically redlined communities through equitable investment and integration.
- Increase the city's tax base through strategic growth and redevelopment.

By inserting a mix of small-scale infill, "gentle densities," and transit-oriented mixed-use development patterns, we find that **Norfolk has a lot more room to grow than one might think — without compromising neighborhood character.**

TESTING SCENARIOS

To test what impacts these development actions may have in different parts of Norfolk, we can select several typical neighborhoods in the city and apply this methodology for growth, combining development ideas with larger actions about mobility, resilience, amenities, urban design, and all the other transformative ideas from the rest of NFK2050.

For the purposes of this planning study, two different neighborhoods — **Little Creek** and **Berkley**—have been selected as "prototype sites" to study the projected benefits of how these transformative policies might be applied.

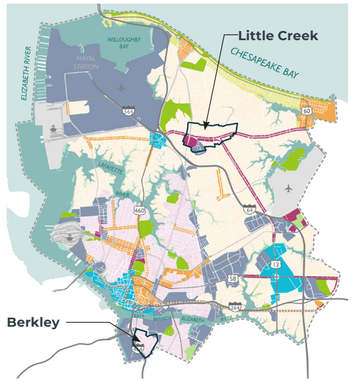


Figure 1: Testing Sites for projected growth

TEST SCENARIO: LITTLE CREEK TODAY

The Little Creek node exhibits the characteristics of a **prototypical node for corridor-based, mixed-use redevelopment.** Situated at the intersection of Military Highway, East Little Creek Road, Chesapeake Boulevard, and Tidewater Drive, the area reflects a conventional car-oriented commercial district with significant potential for transformation.

The site's wide rights-of-way, underutilized parcels, and location within a network of residential neighborhoods position it well for reimagining as a vibrant, transit-oriented community. As of Spring 2025 East Little Creek Rd is also currently undergoing a Corridor Study for physical and economic improvements.



East Little Creek Rd and Halprin Dr intersection



East Little Creek Rd

TEST SCENARIO: BERKLEY TODAY

Berkley exhibits characteristics of a prototypical traditional residential neighborhood, characterized by lower-density housing, institutional anchors, and a strong historical identity.

A future scenario for Berkley could focus on envisioning the neighborhood as a **node of resilience—both socially and environmentally**. As a historically Black community and a formerly redlined area, Berkley has experienced decades of disinvestment, yet it remains rich in community assets that provide a foundation for meaningful transformation.



Main Street and Berkley Ave Intersection



Main Street

LITTLE CREEK BY 2050

The transformation of areas like Little Creek could meaningfully improve quality of life for residents.

Prioritizing Transit-Oriented Development with higher density commercial and residential development along the corridor, active ground-floor uses with high transparency, and a diverse mix of retail and community services will foster a lively, pedestrian-friendly environment. Anchored by a central mobility hub and supported by first- and last-mile connections to surrounding neighborhoods, our Little Creek vision promotes walkability, equitable access, and neighborhood resilience—laying the groundwork for a more inclusive and connected future.



Before: East Little Creek Road

Solar techonology in residential areas

Complete streets with streetscape improvements, bus stops & bike parking

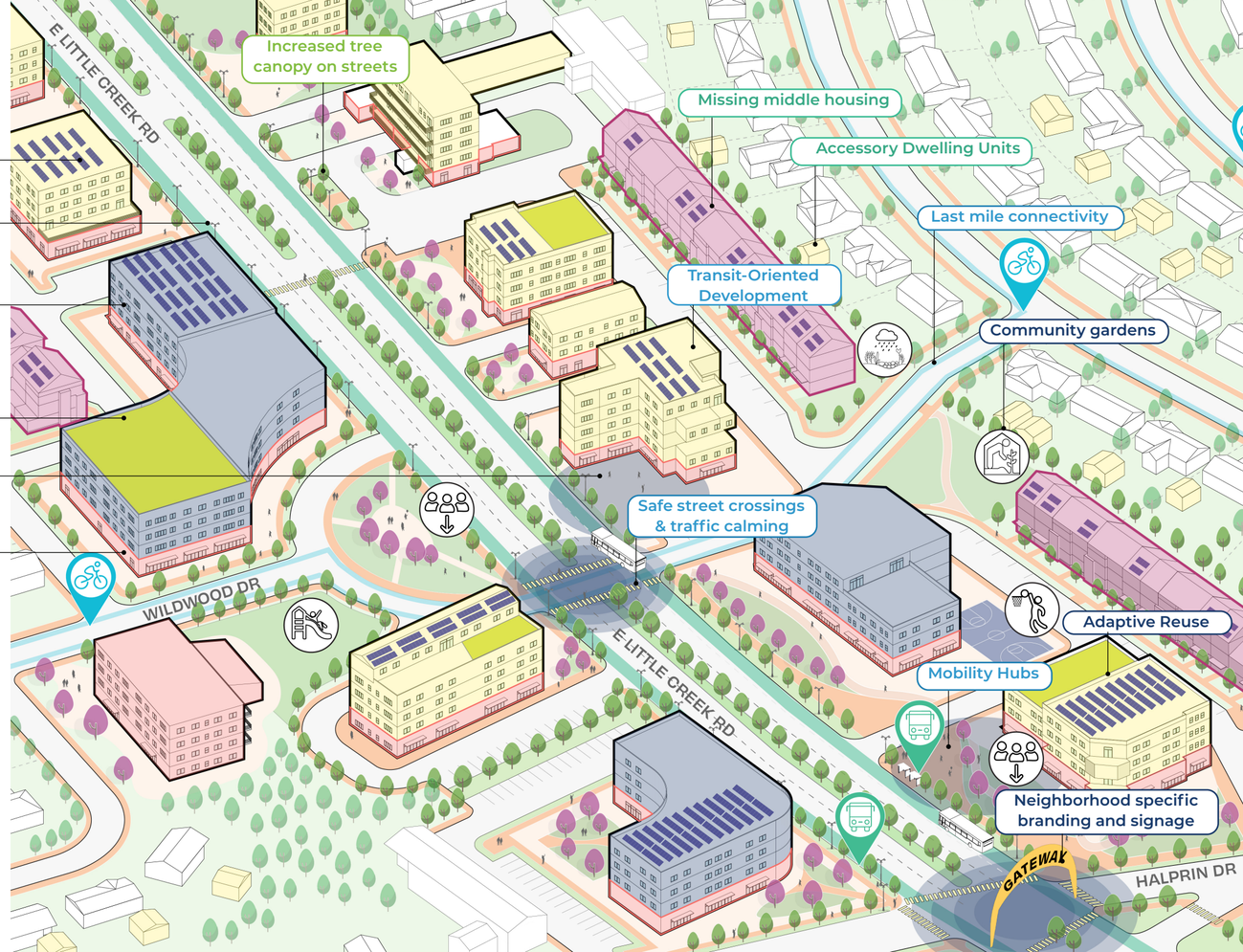
Transformed underutilized parcel into mixed-use buildings

Green and blue roofs for stormwater management

Pop-up plazas, outdoor seating and streeteries

Active ground floors & pedestrian oriented storefronts

After: If key NFK2050 policies were all applied to the Little Creek Node, here is one vision for what it might look like by 2050.



BERKLEY BY 2050

By leveraging its existing assets, neighborhoods like Berkley can lead by example — demonstrating how targeted infrastructure investments in a historically underserved neighborhood can deliver resilience, equity and improved quality of life without large scale redevelopment. With key institutions such as the Sentara Community Care Center, local schools and educational programs, historic churches, a National Register district, and the Berkley Community Center, the neighborhood is well positioned to become a resilient community of the future. These institutions serve as anchors for social infrastructure and, together with Berkley's expansive parks and open spaces, create meaningful opportunities for implementing green infrastructure and stormwater management solutions—such as rain gardens, permeable surfaces, and expanded tree canopies. These interventions can be applied at the scale of individual parcels or households, addressing both flooding and heat vulnerability while also fostering a more attractive, walkable, and healthier environment.



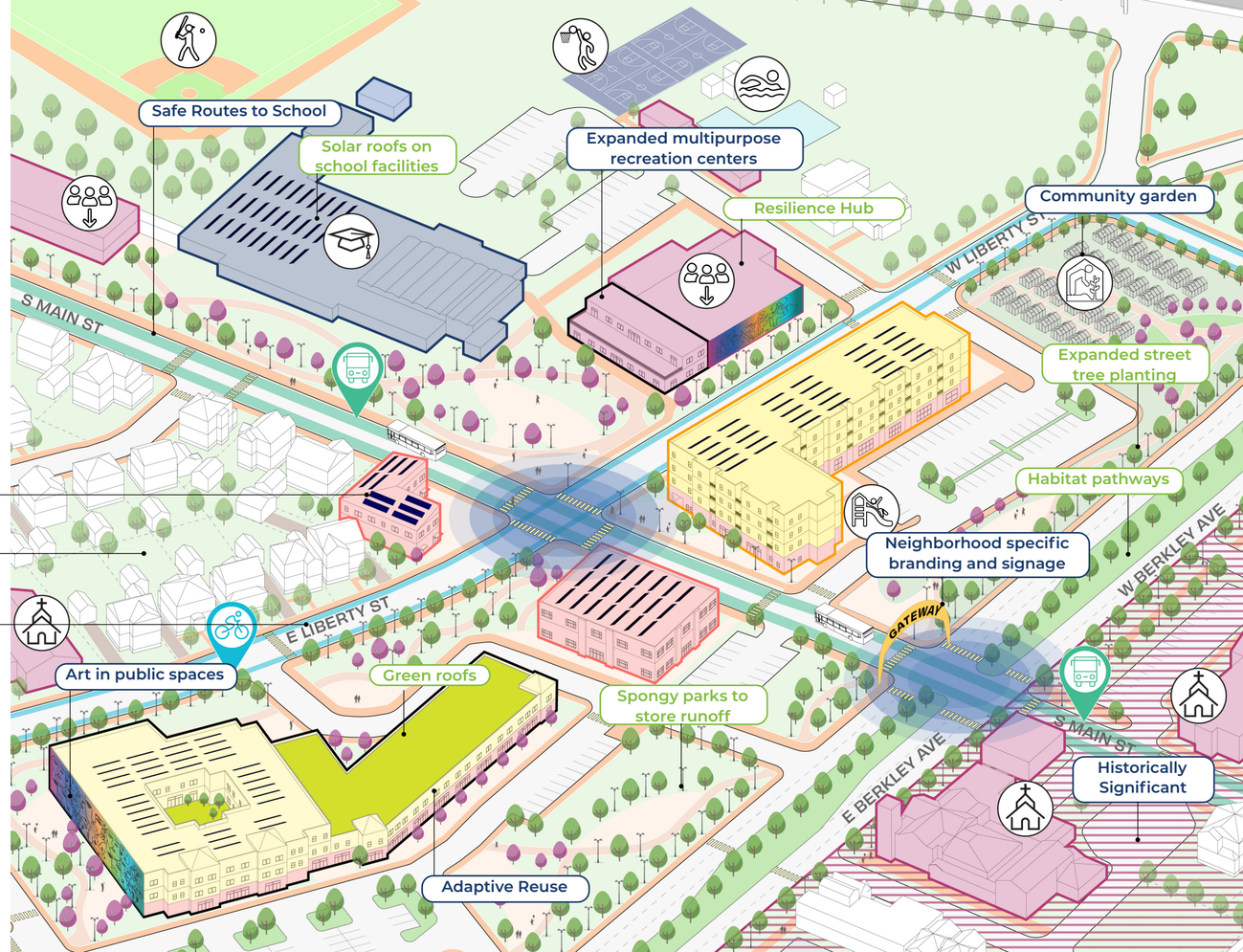
Before: Berkley neighborhood along Main Street

Neighborhood One-Stop-Shop

Household stormwater reuse and grey water recycling with rain gardens

Expanded bike network to residential neighborhoods

After: If key NFK2050 policies were all applied to the Berkley node, here is one vision for what it might look like by 2050



Call to Action

MAKING NFK2050 WORK FOR YOU

BIG, BOLD IDEAS

As demonstrated in a consolidated vision for the future, NFK2050's actions, taken together, can stack up to make meaningful positive change in neighborhoods all over the city.

As a Comprehensive Plan, NFK2050 has many interrelated recommendations that may all require incremental work to get there. Moving from here into implementation, **timing is imperative.** The development of new, high-quality, attractive housing options for residents of all incomes on higher ground needs to happen in the near-term, so residents who may choose to relocate can do so without leaving the city where they're rooted. This housing cannot be built in isolation, but in coordination with community amenities, public realm improvements, and — crucially — multimodal mobility options for new residents to be able to safely and seamlessly get around their neighborhoods and their cities, connected to where they need to go everyday.

By encouraging contextual, sensitive development in existing lower-density districts, Norfolk can continue to grow and prosper.

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

As we move into the future and begin to apply some of NFK2050's land use, regulatory, and community-based policy ideas in the neighborhoods around our city, it's easy to feel like the work of planning for 25 years from now doesn't have a meaningful impact on a Norfolk resident's everyday life. How will all of this actually benefit you and your family, starting now? What can you do to help make it happen?

Long-range planning can feel abstract. City-led documents can feel very top-down. Large-scale funding sources may be volatile in the coming years. But in reality, **there's much that an average Norfolk citizen can do, in their own neighborhood, to take some of these ideas into action.**

Neighbors can reach out to other neighbors to build social ties, property owners can work to build sustainability and resilience on their buildings and sites, entrepreneurs can seek to launch businesses that will serve their local communities, and prospective workers, both young and old, can learn new skills to be ready for evolving industrial opportunities. We can all work together, top-down and bottom-up, to create the culture shift that Norfolk needs in order to become more resilient, equitable, and prosperous by 2050.

Norfolk can't do this alone, and neither can City Hall. But if our residents, stakeholders, and partners all row in the same direction, we can set course towards achieving a brighter, more connected, and more equitable city for our children to call home in 2050 and beyond.

(City of Norfolk)





(City of Norfolk)

NFK 2050

THE CITY OF NORFOLK

www.nfk2050.com