WELCOME TO COMMUNITY MEETING #3

Midtown Plan
CITY OF NORFOLK

- Formal presentation will start at 6:05 PM
- No audio until presentation starts
- Enter the raffle to win a gift card from local businesses. Email MidtownNorfolk@gmail.com and you’ll be entered to win!

COPY FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

- During the presentation, we will mute everyone.
- This presentation will be recorded and can be shared with those who could not attend.
- We will provide an opportunity for questions and comments at the end of the meeting using the Chat feature.
- If you experience any technical difficulties, you can communicate with our meeting host through the Chat feature. Our host will be closely monitoring the chat throughout the entire meeting.
- For follow-up questions and comments you can email us at MidtownNorfolk@gmail.com

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AGENDA

6:05 - 6:55

Presentation
- What we have heard
- What we have learned
- Conceptual Urban Design Plan

6:55 - 7:05

Q&A via Chat feature

7:05 - 7:15

Next Steps
OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

LISTENING
December - January
Listening and understanding the needs of the residents and the neighborhood

TESTING
February
Testing ideas for the neighborhood with residents and stakeholders during a 3-day community workshop

DECIDING
March - April
Deciding what the best solutions are for the Midtown Norfolk Area Plan
CHARRETTE WEEK SCHEDULE

**Tuesday, February 15**
1. 9-10 am  Virtual Presentation with Community Discussion
2. 12-2 pm  Virtual Design Session with Community Discussion
3. 6-7:30 pm  Virtual Presentation with Community Discussion

**Wednesday, February 16**
4. 12-2 pm  Virtual Design Session with Community Discussion
5. 6-7:30 pm  Virtual Design Session with Community Discussion

**Thursday, February 17**
6. 12-2 pm  Virtual Design Session with Community Discussion
7. 6-7:30 pm  Virtual Presentation with Community Discussion

Don't have a computer? Need alternate access to Zoom meetings? Join Us @
The Y on Granby
2901 Granby St, Norfolk, VA 23504

Prizes for Participants! Throughout the week we'll be raffling off gift cards for:
- Handsome Biscuit
- Maker's Craft Brewery
- Coalescence Coffee
- Rip Rap Brewery
- Freshtopia
WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED
STUDY AREA LOCATION

– Connected to key Norfolk neighborhoods
– Situated at the nexus of key roadways and pathways for the city
– Great potential to supplement the existing neighborhoods around it and develop its own character
– Great potential to bring a sense of wholeness to this part of the city
STUDY AREA LOCATION
OPPORTUNITY
PROJECT STUDY AREA
X-RAY: STREET FRAMEWORK

- East-west connectivity
- To the north, Church Street is the primary (and only) access point to the site
- To the south, the rail is a major physical barrier
Consistent patterns of residential properties to the east and west

Larger buildings are located towards the southern corners of the site
X-RAY: RESIDENTIAL USES

- Consistent residential fabric in Park Place and Villa Heights
- Very few residences in the boundary
Considerable amount of commercial uses are located in the district.

Clearest corridor in the area is Granby Street.
Industrial uses clustered around the railroad
X-RAY: DEDICATED OPEN SPACE

- No formal open space exists on the site
- Small-scale neighborhood parks nearby
WHAT WE HEARD
What are the strengths of the neighborhood and the site?

What are the weaknesses of the neighborhood and the site?

What are the opportunities of the neighborhood and the site?
**STRENGTHS**
- Strong community institutions, businesses nearby
- Great connectivity to & from city

**WEAKNESSES**
- Streets for cars, not pedestrians
- Lacks a real destination or center

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Anchor the surrounding neighborhoods
- Mixed-use development—more residential, more commercial, more restaurants
- Create a safe, family-friendly place
GOAL

The plan could provide a sense of wholeness to this area of Norfolk, connecting the neighborhoods together.

Midtown could represent the best of Norfolk’s remarkable character. It could:

- Be easy to get around, by car, bike or foot.
- Include high-quality public open spaces for people to enjoy.
- Include a wide variety of uses including housing, retail, commercial, office, institutional, and light industrial.
- Become a place to Live, Work, and Play.
## WHAT WE HEARD

### ALT 1
**MIDTOWN GREENBELT**
- Connectivity is important with Lafayette Park to the north & future east-west connections along tracks
- Allows for great multi-modal connections
- Links to surrounding neighborhoods

### ALT 2
**MIDTOWN CENTRAL PARK**
- Provides important central community gathering space
- Versatility to host events, community market, vendors
- Works well with existing uses around the site
- Focuses all the energy in one location

### ALT 3
**MIDTOWN STRING OF PARKS**
- Smaller, more intimate spaces will get used by the community members
- Opportunity for multiple active & passive uses
- Provides attractions throughout the area
- Important to create connections between parks

### AMENITIES & PROGRAMMING
**WE WANT TO SEE**
- Passive spaces
- Gardens with seating
- Playgrounds for kids
- Exercise equipment

- Gathering spaces
- Snack stand
- Community gardens
- Shade trees

- Public bathrooms
- Public showers
- Good lighting
CONCEPT URBAN DESIGN PLAN
– As we discussed, the neighborhood is significantly lacking in open space

– Typically, livable cities have open space within a short, comfortable walk of a home or business
CREATING A NETWORK OF OPEN SPACES

- Connect to the future extension of the Elizabeth River Trail (east-west along the railroad tracks)
- Bring the Zoo and Lafayette Park into a connected network of parks
- Create a safe, comfortable, green environment for pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages
CONCEPT OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK
WHAT WE HEARD: OPEN SPACE PROGRAMMING

A. Community gardens
B. Farmers market
C. Shade trees
D. Public bathrooms
E. Good lighting
F. Shade
G. Multi-generational activities
H. Amphitheater/stage
I. Passive spaces
J. Gardens with seating
K. Playgrounds
L. Exercise equipment
M. Gathering spaces
N. Snack stand
O. Cultural performances
P. Connections through green space
CONCEPT OPEN SPACE ACTIVITIES
VIEW OF THE PARK
CONNECTIVITY

We heard that although it’s nice to have great public open spaces, it is important to be able to get to them comfortably as a pedestrian.
CONNECTIVITY PRECEDENTS

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– While Church Street features a classic garden boulevard design with landscaped medians and plenty of street trees, other streets in the Midtown lack greenery and shade trees.

– Great neighborhoods and park networks use shade trees and other plantings to enhance pedestrian comfort.
- Adding street trees along sidewalks creates a more comfortable walking area for pedestrians
- Street trees help buffer between uses
- Plantings in parks can help to unite the look and feel of Midtown
MIXED USE NEIGHBORHOOD

We heard that Midtown is home to many uses, and can accommodate so much more. It is a center for jobs, yet at the same time, needs housing and amenities to serve Midtown and the neighborhoods around it.
MIXED USE PRECEDENTS
- All existing uses may remain in perpetuity
- This effort proposes future land use opportunities and explores how Midtown can evolve over time
- All existing uses may remain in perpetuity
- This effort proposes future land use opportunities and explores how Midtown can evolve over time
- We have focused our efforts for today’s presentation exclusively on city-owned land (shown in blue)
THINKING AHEAD

While we are focused on growth within city-owned property, we are also thinking about the future.

What does the character of each of these places feel like?

How does early development on city-owned land lead to positive change for the rest of the Midtown area?
EXISTING COMMERCIAL USES
Extending the commercial character of Granby Street into the Midtown area as a “Main Street” environment with services and amenities for the neighborhoods nearby.
GRANBY STREET TODAY
GRANBY STREET TOMORROW
EXISTING INDUSTRIAL USES
UBERN INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

– Heavy and light industrial uses have been clustered along Norfolk railroads for years; it is a part of the character of this district

– Today, these industrial districts are vibrant with maker spaces, breweries, offices, and light industrial

– Industrial uses are important to the economic health of the city
URBAN INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT PRECEDENTS
DESIGNING GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS

We heard that it is important to ensure that all existing businesses and residences remain, with new development respecting and supporting the existing neighborhood fabric.
EXISTING RESIDENTIAL USES
Distributing a variety of park spaces, some smaller, some larger, some active, some passive, throughout the area creates a walkable, comfortable neighborhood feel.
– Filling in the area around the parks with mixed use development brings activity, community, and life to the region

– Providing a spectrum of housing options (for-sale, rental, affordable, apartments, townhouses, live-work, etc.) is an important addition for Midtown
RESIDENTIAL PRECEDENTS

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ALONG THE CHURCH STREET MIXED USE CORRIDOR
PROPOSED LAND USE DISTRICTS
PHASE 1 PLAN CONCEPT — WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK
PHASE 1 PLAN CONCEPT — OPEN SPACE
PHASE 1 PLAN CONCEPT — BUILDING TYPES
DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR THE MIDTOWN VISION

1. **Develop High Quality Pedestrian Connectivity**
   Through improved infrastructure, create better connections to and through Midtown

2. **Bring New Residential Uses to the Study Area**
   Expand available housing options in this region of Norfolk for both current and future residents

3. **Make Midtown a Destination**
   Create a sense of wholeness to this area of Norfolk through new public spaces, retail, and amenities

4. **Ensure Mix of Uses**
   Create a Midtown District where the community can live, work, and play
1. Develop High Quality Pedestrian Connectivity
2. Bring New Residential Uses to the Study Area
3. Make Midtown a Destination
4. Ensure Mix of Uses
Deciding on the Final Recommendations

- In-Person Weekend Community Meeting - March
- Incorporating feedback into design(s)
- Community Celebration - April
- Making recommendations to the City for the long-term future of the site
Q&A

1. Did this evening’s presentation capture your vision of what Midtown Norfolk could be?
2. From what we shared the presentation, did we hear you correctly?

Please use the Chat feature to ask your questions.
CONTACT US

MidtownNorfolk@gmail.com
– Enter the raffle to win a gift cards from local businesses during the virtual charrette
– Meeting Updates
– Questions
– Comments
Creating a sense of place through collaboration, context, and community.