

Good afternoon,

Thank you, Charity Volman-Winn, and Towne Bank.

Thank you, Bryan Stephens, and the Hampton Roads Chamber, and thank you all for joining us today, as we reflect on the state of our city.

I am honored to be joined by the Vice Mayor and members of the Norfolk City Council:

- Martin Thomas, Jr.
- Thomas Smigiel, Jr.
- Mamie Johnson,
- Andria McClellan,
- Courtney Doyle,
- Danica Royster, and
- John "JP" Paige

I am also joined by Council Appointees:

- City Manager Patrick Roberts
- City Attorney Bernard Pishko
- City Clerk Richard Allan Bull
- Real Estate Assessor Pete Rodda, and
- City Auditor Tammie Dantzler

And Our Constitutional Officers:

- Circuit Court Clerk George Schaefer
- Sheriff Joseph Baron
- Treasurer Daun Sessoms Hester
- Commissioner of Revenue Blythe Ann Scott, and
- Commonwealth's Attorney Ramin Fatehi

I'm honored that the old mayor Paul Fraim, as well as, former councilmembers Terry Whibley, Andy Protogyrou and Randy Wright could join us.

Thank you all for being here today.

I'm excited to share the significant progress our city has made in the past year.

Together, we have achieved notable advancements in public safety, strengthened our community's well-being, and improved our financial standing.

We have embraced challenges, celebrated victories, and laid the foundation for a brighter and prosperous future.

Ensuring public safety remains our top priority.

Our investment in innovative technology, community engagement, and code enforcement, along with focused recruitment efforts, have led to a reduction in crime, a net gain in sworn officers, and a safer city.

Violent crime is down by 24%, homicides by 33%, and stolen vehicles by 20%.

Our Real Time Crime Center, equipped with over 1,800 Automated License Plate Recognition cameras, enhances our crime-fighting capabilities.

AND, integrating the 911 emergency operations call center into the police department, enhances emergency management and fosters a more efficient response.

Thank you to Police Chief Mark Talbot, law enforcement officers, sheriff deputies, park rangers, and community partners for your dedication.

Norfolk Fire-Rescue responded to nearly 54,000 calls last year, prompting upgrades in firefighting capabilities and emergency medical services; including:

- 7 new state-of-the-art fire trucks
- Ambulances stationed at every fire station
- the city's first severe weather truck for complex rescue operations
- Deployment of Fire Boat 13 at Willoughby Marina
- Next month, 33 new firefighters will graduate and 50 recruits will start training in August.
- These investments highlight our commitment to ensuring public safety and community well-being.

A special thank you to Chief Sidney Carroll and the Norfolk Fire-Rescue team.

Norfolk's global importance stems from its military presence, maritime influence, and international port, forging crucial connections worldwide.

Naval Station Norfolk serves as a key hub for the U.S. Navy's operational and logistical capabilities, ensuring maritime security and projecting naval power.

We extend our gratitude to our military leaders, service members, and military families for their unwavering dedication and service to our nation.

With us today are:

- Captain Janet Days, Commanding Officer Naval Station Norfolk
- Captain Matt Frauenzimmer, Commanding Officer, Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads

Thank you for being here.

Norfolk is home to NATO's Allied Command Transformation and Joint Forces Command, the only two NATO commands in North America.

With Sweden's recent inclusion, these commands now unite 32 member countries.

We eagerly welcome Sweden to Norfolk and look forward to commemorating their membership at the Norfolk NATO Festival Flag Raising Ceremony next Thursday.

Joining us from NATO is General Philippe Lavigne, Supreme Allied Commander Transformation.

Thank you for being here.

The Port of Virginia, headquartered in Norfolk, is expanding its global reach with new direct connections to emerging markets.

Over 95% of the world's shipping lines serve our port, linking Norfolk to over 380 ports worldwide.

In addition to its significant economic impact:

- handling 26 million tons of cargo annually,
- and supporting 565,000 jobs, the Port of Virginia has achieved another milestone.

It's the first U.S. East Coast port to operate on 100% clean energy.

Norfolk's economic development strategy prioritizes job growth and entrepreneurial empowerment through various initiatives:

- The Commercial Corridor Program: Injects vital funding to enhance the economic vitality of our city's main streets and neighborhoods.
- The Capital Access Program: Tailored to assist new, existing, and expanding businesses facing challenges accessing traditional financing.
- The Facade Improvement Grant: Is an addition to the Commercial Corridor Program, providing financial support to business owners for both exterior and interior improvements.
- The Enterprise Zone Program: Offers state and local tax incentives to businesses investing in and creating jobs within designated Enterprise Zones.
- NORFOLK WORKS: Aligns economic and workforce development efforts, champions recruitment of Norfolk talent to support business attraction, retention, expansion, and collaboration with workforce partners for in-demand employment opportunities; and
- The Bon Appétit: Food Business Forum & Vendor Fair, provides a platform for aspiring and existing food industry entrepreneurs, local caterers, food truck vendors, restaurant owners, and other food service professionals to connect with the City on upcoming contract opportunities.

Economic development in Norfolk is thriving with significant investments and job creation across various sectors:

- DHL – international shipping and courier services, expanded its Norfolk operation with a \$7.3 million investment, adding 30 new jobs.
- Bauer Compressors invested \$7.4 million, creating 47 new jobs.
- KTN in Campostella invested \$60 million for a second expansion, adding 76 new jobs.
- Booz Allen Hamilton established a business services center at Lake Wright, creating 90 new jobs.
- Top Tier Solar Solutions relocated to Norfolk, creating 70 new jobs.
- Burlington's arrival at JANAF Shopping Center boosts its occupancy to 97%, the highest in six years.
- Firestone Complete Auto Care invested over \$1 million in a new facility next to the Marine Corps Exchange (MCX) at Camp Allen, creating 8 new jobs.
- Lyon Shipyard is investing \$8.5 million for an expansion that will create 134 new jobs.
- Towne Financial Services and CHKD moved into the former Norfolk Southern building. With a \$67 million investment, now 900 associates from both organizations are enjoying the 22-story office building and Commercial Place garage.
- \$39 million in federal funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation is helping to transform the former Lambert's Point Dock into the Fairwinds Landing marine terminal, an offshore wind logistics facility.
- Fairwinds Landing is investing \$100 million to construct a 48,500-square foot Monitoring and Coordination Center, serving as Dominion Energy's Operations and Maintenance Base for offshore wind and military support, generating over 200 jobs.
- Newport News Shipbuilding's expansion to Fairwinds Landing strengthens its ties with over 70 local suppliers, creating 150 jobs, an initial investment of \$25 million, with plans to increase it to \$100 million over the next five years.

Innovation thrives in Norfolk's Innovation Corridor (The NIC), driving transformation and growth.

Building on the NIC's success with \$39 million in capital investments and the creation of 400 new tech jobs.

Norfolk has joined the Global Institute on Innovation Districts, Norfolk stands alongside renowned hubs, such as, Cortex in St. Louis, Cleveland Health Tech, and districts in Melbourne, Australia, Milan, Italy, and Medellin, Columbia.

In the NIC:

Fugro Geo technics, The Americas Center of Expertise for Offshore Wind has created 15 high-paying jobs, and

Deme Group's work in offshore wind energy and maritime infrastructure have generated 40 new jobs.

These initiatives solidify Norfolk's pivotal role in the global innovation landscape.

Addressing complex environmental challenges requires collaborative efforts.

In June, Norfolk partnered with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, securing \$400 million in federal support and \$24.6 million from Virginia's Community Flood Preparedness Fund for the Resilient Norfolk Coastal Storm Risk Management Project.

The total projected cost of this project is \$2.6 billion, with 65% paid for by the federal government.

Phase 1 project design is nearing completion.

Addressing recurrent flooding:

A \$2.4 million Defense Community Infrastructure Pilot Program Grant was secured for Hampton Boulevard.

The \$112 million Ohio Creek Watershed Flood Mitigation project in Grandy Village and Chesterfield Heights was completed in June.

The Elizabeth River Project made history by signing the nation's first rolling conservation easement.

With an \$8 million investment, the Pru and Lewis Ryan Resilience Lab is educating homeowners and developers on adapting to climate change and rising sea levels in ways that benefit both the ecosystem and the community.

Over \$90 million in federal grants were obtained for urban development in the St. Paul's Community, transforming 22.2 acres into the Blue-Greenway Coastal Resilience Park.

Old Dominion University and the ODU Research Foundation secured over \$700,000 for a collaborative project addressing recurrent flooding in five southside Norfolk neighborhoods.

This is a collaborative effort between ODU, Hampton University, Wetlands Watch, and the City of Norfolk.

Beyond strengthening infrastructure against climate impacts, Norfolk is prioritizing sustainability, and leading in energy demand reduction and facilitating access to greener options.

Our forward-thinking initiatives earned the SolSmart Gold designation, making it easier for residents and businesses to access and install solar energy, a distinction shared by only seven localities in Virginia.

Complementing these efforts is Norfolk's 37-year, "Tree City USA" designation.

Through the Arbor Day, and Jam'n Jamz Fruit and Nut Tree giveaway initiatives, over 800 trees were adopted, thanks to the collaborative efforts of city departments, environmental partners, residents, and community volunteers.

The Commercial Place Fountain is set for transformation into an interactive, artistic space. Motion-activated sensors will create nighttime light and music shows, enhancing the Main Street experience.

AND, the Commercial Place Fountain will become part of an interconnected pedestrian greenway, as Main Street Grove. As our first "Shared Street", Main Street Grove will be a reimagined green space, a place where residents and visitors can gather under a beautiful urban tree canopy.

Our dedication to resilience extends beyond the environment to essential services.

Last year, Norfolk Cares received over 169,000 inquiries from residents and corporate citizens.

To uphold our commitment to service excellence, we're placing the Norfolk Cares Center directly under the oversight of the City Manager. This move aims to improve efficiency and effectiveness to meet the needs of the residents and business owners of Norfolk.

And, we are utilizing the Norfolk Open Data portal to improve resident services, enhance decision-making, and equip City Council and staff with vital data to make informed decisions.

Norfolk continues its rich cultural heritage and community engagement through the arts.

We unveiled the "End of Massive Resistance" public art installation, commemorating the struggle for justice during Virginia's school desegregation.

This installation honors the Norfolk 17... and the dedication last year was attended by members of the Norfolk 17 and the Lost Class of 1959.

"Gratitude," a magnificent 20-foot-tall sculpture at the Sentara Brock Cancer Center, welcomes visitors with interlaced hands symbolizing collective thankfulness and a ribbon representing hope and unity.

Our public arts program has installed over 75 permanent pieces of art, and countless temporary pieces since its inception.

Education is a catalyst for economic growth.

Norfolk continues to invest in and partner with Norfolk Public Schools to ensure our high school graduates are college or career ready.

The Class of 2023, despite pandemic interruptions, earned nearly \$75 million in scholarships and pursued higher education at over 165 colleges and universities.

Our investment in education and technical workforce training is paving the way for the success of the next generation of leaders.

Norfolk Public Schools and the Aviation Institute of Maintenance launched a dual enrollment/dual credit Aviation and Aerospace Pathway Program for high school juniors and seniors.

The city, Norfolk Public Schools, and the Hampton Roads Workforce Council hosted the inaugural "Hire Our Grads Signing Day" at the Norfolk Technical Center, resulting in 21 students securing employment.

With us today are School Board members:

- Tiffany Moore Buffalo
- Dr Noel Gabrielle
- Carlos Clanton
- Dr. Adele Martin

- Tonya Bhasin
- Student representative, Cameron Say-ter,
- And, Superintendent Dr. Sharon Byrdsong

Thank you for your dedication to public education.

Supporting higher education is vital for cultivating highly trained college graduates and a professionally skilled workforce.

Tidewater Community College opened a new 37,000 square foot Visual Arts & Design Center, transforming a vacant space into state-of-the-art classrooms and studios with an \$8 million investment.

The Hermitage Museum and Gardens completed a historic renovation of their current art building, creating the Goode Family Visual Arts School. This \$4.2 million expansion will serve one thousand students each year, a 60% increase from previous years.

WELDNOW, a training program, in collaboration with TCC, Norfolk Works, and industry partners, is training students for today's workforce in manufacturing, maritime, and transportation fields.

Aviation Institute of Maintenance partnered with Lockheed Martin to provide a new program for the aerospace and defense industry; and joined forces with Piedmont Airlines, a subsidiary of American Airlines, to provide aviation maintenance technician training for selected students, guaranteeing them a job with the airline.

Newport News Shipbuilding's employee students are now training and testing for American Welding Society certification at Tidewater Tech.

Norfolk State University is constructing a \$141.4 million science building, upgrading science education and research facilities for the next generation of scientists.

Virginia Wesleyan University introduced the Coastal Advantage Scholarship, a tuition program that nearly eliminates costs for qualifying first-year students. This program is designed to assist commuter students within a 30 to 40-mile radius.

With us today, is this year's inaugural recipient, Norfolk native, Cecilia Candelauria.

TCC-ODU Monarch Ready program, enrolled over 100 transfer students in its inaugural class, streamlining the transition from Tidewater Community College to Old Dominion University.

Eastern Virginia Medical School is celebrating its 50th anniversary, as its Physician Assistant program ranks among the top 10 percent nationally.

EVMS' Deliver on the Promise campaign raised over \$85 million, ensuring highly trained healthcare professionals are prepared to address community healthcare needs.

Thanks to our colleges, universities, and trade schools... higher education outcomes, student success, and workforce training opportunities are thriving in Norfolk.

Accessible and quality healthcare significantly contribute to community health, resilience, and vitality.

Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters opened its first outpatient pharmacy, investing \$950,000 and creating 12 new jobs.

CHKD was among the first in the nation to administer a new gene therapy drug for Duchenne muscular dystrophy, a rare genetic condition.

Sentara Norfolk General Hospital, recognized as a "Magnet Hospital" for outstanding nursing standards, ranks among the top 2% nationwide.

Sentara Norfolk General also launched a state-of-the-art \$1.2 million antepartum unit, the first in the region, dedicated to high-risk pregnancies, serving nearly 900 patients annually.

The Jordan-Newby Anchor Branch Library, in partnership with Sentara, EVMS, and Norfolk's Department of Human Services, now offers telehealth services for the community of Broad Creek.

Healthier757 and Ed - Logics, rooted in Norfolk, are championing essential efforts to improve health literacy, advance regional prosperity, and address health disparities.

Thank you to all of our healthcare institutions, partners, providers and heroes.

Norfolk stands as the regional arts and cultural epicenter, showcasing remarkable achievements and contributions.

The Patriotic Festival, marking its 20th anniversary, returns to Norfolk, drawing over 20,000 attendees and generating \$1.3 million in ticket sales, with a significant portion from outside the region.

Norfolk hosts the MEAC basketball tournaments, attracting nearly 10,000 attendees, generating over \$5 million in economic impact, and supporting over 1,000 jobs.

AND, MEAC recently announced Norfolk as the host city through 2027.

Virginia Stage Company achieved a record-breaking season with 25,000 attendees, including a successful run of *Fiddler on the Roof* grossing over \$287,000, their highest in history.

Virginia Opera prepares to celebrate its 50th anniversary with impactful educational programs and the world premiere of "Loving Versus Virginia."

Virginia Arts Festival generated over \$20 million in economic impact last year, attracting visitors from all 50 states and 11 countries.

This year, the arts festival and The Virginia International Tattoo presents "A Celebration of Freedom" with over 800 performers from 7 nations, commemorating the 80th anniversary of D-Day and 75th anniversary of NATO's founding.

And this season includes performances by The Dance Theatre of Harlem and Broadway star Adrienne Warren.

The Hurrah Players celebrate their 40th season with the opening of the Hurrah Television and Film Academy, a \$4.25 million facility in the NEON district.

The Governor's School for the Arts continues to nurture talent, with the Class of 2023 securing over \$13 million in scholarships and raising over \$320,000 for cultural projects.

Seven Venues hosted 627 shows, entertaining nearly one million patrons, resulting in a \$24 million economic impact, a 33% increase from 2022.

The Virginia Symphony Orchestra engaged over 22,000 patrons in Norfolk, contributing to a household income of \$5.8 million.

VSO is preparing for performances including Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto and The Book of Mormon.

And this season, Broadway in Norfolk presents a stellar lineup at Chrysler Hall, including Les Misérables, Mean Girls, Tina - The Tina Turner Musical, MJ - the story of Michael Jackson, Mamma Mia!, and Pretty Woman.

And! At the Scope Arena, Journey celebrates their 50th anniversary, followed by Cirque Du Soleil OVO, Heart, and Cheap Trick.

For Norfolk to continue to thrive as a vibrant hub of arts, culture, and entertainment.

The Scope Arena and Chrysler Hall Complex, over 50 years old, are poised for a transformative renovation to support Broadway, national performances, sports, entertainment and more!

They provide a venue for community gatherings, fostering a sense of civic pride and identity.

Both venues stand as Norfolk landmarks, reflecting the city's architectural evolution and commitment to arts and culture.

Scope Arena's transformation includes: increased seating, up to 1500 new seats, diverse food, beverage, club and dining options, expanded concourses and restrooms, interactive technologies, and improved load-in and backstage efficiency.

Chrysler Hall's transformation includes: improved plaza accessibility with ramps, stairs, and street enhancements, expanded lobbies, enhanced seating configuration, stage, sound, lighting, and acoustics upgrades, increased restroom capacity, and expanded food and beverage stations on every level.

Norfolk stands as a vibrant hub for cruise ships, festivals, and tourism.

Festevents drew over 400,000 visitors to Town Point Park waterfront and Ocean View beachfront, generating a \$38 million economic impact.

Tourism is a key driver of Norfolk's economy, employing over 8,000 people, contributing \$1.3 billion, and generating \$90.4 million in taxes, with an increase hotel occupancy by 3.4%, and room revenue by 9.2%...allowing for \$2 million to be invested in The Selden Market, an entrepreneurial ecosystem and retail incubator supporting Norfolk businesses catering to locals, tourists, and guests.

Next Tuesday, we will commemorate the 80th commissioning of the Battleship Wisconsin, one of the last Iowa-Class battleships to be built.

It was commissioned in 1944, assigned to the Pacific theater and served in the Korean conflict and Operation Desert Storm.

This year, Nauticus celebrates its 30th anniversary with an enhanced facility, following a successful \$21.5 million capital campaign.

Last year, we welcomed a record-breaking 250,000 cruise passengers, generating nearly \$15 million.

As we gear up to become the East Coast's newest year-round cruise port in 2025, the Peter G. Decker Half Moore Cruise Center is undergoing a \$12 million enhancement.

In the wake of Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse, Norfolk is providing crucial support to our cruise line partners.

Currently, Royal Caribbean's "Vision of the Seas" is docked at Nauticus, with over 2,000 passengers boarding, while "Carnival Legend" will return on Monday, welcoming another 2,100 guests.

This summer, joining Carnival Cruise Lines and adding to our lineup in 2025, is Princess Cruises' 'Island Princess', accommodating 2,200 passengers.

In Norfolk, this multimodal approach reduces congestion, fuels economic growth and enhances quality of life.

Norfolk International Airport serves as a significant economic driver, employing over 17,000 people regionally and generating a \$2.2 billion economic impact.

With 4.5 million passengers and 75,000 flight operations last year, the airport is investing nearly \$700 million in improvements, including a new hotel and expanded facilities.

Additionally, \$6 million in federal funding has been secured, for a new International Arrivals Facility.

Amtrak's expanded service between Norfolk and Washington D.C. saw a 31% increase in ridership, serving nearly 500,000 passengers, generating the interest for new routes.

Continuing the tradition of ferry service on the Elizabeth River, Hampton Roads Transit welcomed two new ferries to the fleet this year.

In Norfolk, this multimodal approach reduces congestion, fuels economic growth and enhances quality of life.

Last year, Norfolk had a surge in residential development, permitting nearly 1,000 additional units compared to 2022.

Overall, the city issued nearly 3,000 commercial and residential building permits, amounting to a significant investment of \$462 million.

The former Greyhound Bus Station is undergoing transformation into "Houndstooth," a Breeden development situated in the Neon Arts District.

Houndstooth will feature over 220 residential units, and will include a parking garage, gym, recreation room, and a rooftop deck. This development represents a \$35 million capital investment, creating over 300 construction jobs.

At the Railyard at Lambert's Point, Meredith Construction and CCB Development are nearing completion of a \$40 million investment, reaching its tenant capacity.

The late Mike Cutter, in his role as senior business development manager for the City of Norfolk, played a pivotal role in reshaping the Railyard at Lambert's Point, demonstrating a strong commitment to community and service.

We deeply appreciate his leadership, dedication, and unwavering efforts to enhance Norfolk. He will always be remembered.

The former DePaul Hospital site is set to become the 'St. Vincent de Paul House,' hosting the James Barry-Robinson Institute's Next Step for Success program. This \$40 million investment will support educational growth and development for students aged 13 to 18.

Bonaventure Realty Group is investing \$70 million to develop Attain at Newtown, a 320-unit complex on the former site of Smitty's Mobile Home Park, creating 100 construction jobs and 6 permanent positions.

EDC Homes is investing \$25 million in The Spot at East Beach on East Little Creek Road, developing 100 apartment homes and creating 150 construction jobs.

The Arch at Park Place, on the former site of Park Place Methodist Church, is being developed by Monument Companies with a \$9.3 million investment. It will offer apartment and townhomes and generate 68 construction jobs.

Monument is also developing Colonial Flats Townhomes on Carolina Avenue, with a \$5 million investment and 18 construction jobs.

AND, Monument is transforming the former Chenman Scrap Metal site into Chenman Lofts in the Railroad District. This \$11 million investment is generating 100 construction jobs, and will provide 100 apartment homes.

Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NRHA) secured a \$6.4 million grant aimed at addressing the minority homeownership disparity within the city. Funded by Virginia Housing, the grant will support NRHA's HomeNet Homeownership Center, enabling them to offer down payment and closing cost assistance, along with a 1% interest rate reduction, to individuals historically hindered by barriers to homeownership.

In September, Brinshore Development, Banc of America Community Development Company, and BBRM Norfolk Partners broke ground for Unity Place at Kindred.

Unity Place will offer mixed-income housing, providing former Tidewater Gardens families with the opportunity to return. This \$65 million investment will feature 140 apartment homes.

While poverty in Norfolk has decreased by 4.1%, homelessness presents persistent challenges, often exacerbating chronic health issues due to unstable housing.

To address this, I've urged the City Manager to establish a multiagency task force focused on Housing Stability, Outreach and Support, Prevention Strategies, and Empowerment and Education, crucial for effective homelessness intervention.

At the same time, we're enhancing The Center, our city's emergency shelter for single adults experiencing homelessness.

Last year, the Norfolk Eviction Prevention Center provided rental and utility assistance to nearly 300 households, utilizing over \$700,000 from the Virginia Eviction Reduction Pilot Program and HUD community development block grants to prevent evictions citywide.

Norfolk's dedication to green spaces is highlighted by ranking third on the Trust for Public Land's 2023 list, with nearly seven parks and school playgrounds per 10,000 residents.

The Elizabeth River Trail continues to thrive, surpassing 625,000 users in 2023.

This summer, an expansion begins with a new trailhead and upgrades at the Larchmont Library, funded by a \$405,000 grant from the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

Tidewater Tech and Centura College will partner with ERT, with students helping to construct the trailhead shelters.

And in Ocean View, the manager has proposed \$10 million in the city's capital improvement plan to ensure a comprehensive beach renourishment project with the US Army Corps of Engineers to preserve and protect our beautiful 7.3 mile shoreline along the Chesapeake Bay.

In Norfolk, we are actively listening to residents, seeking input, and gathering insights on current needs and future aspirations.

Building on planNorfolk2030, NFK 2050 engages community and stakeholders through citywide workshops to refine goals and strategies for future growth and economic vitality.

Norfolk is winning :

- \$65.5 million for the 110,000 square foot Norfolk Fitness and Wellness Center Library Facility .
- Jordan-Newby Anchor Branch Library enhanced youth engagement with a dedicated teen space.
- Park Place Branch Library expanded high-tech collaboration rooms and a teen area.
- Five Points Civic Plaza, a versatile park, a community garden, and entertainment pavilion.
- Norfolk Botanical Garden, boasting over half a million visitors last year, In 2025, it will unveil the 'Garden of Tomorrow', a \$42 million dollar project featuring a STEM-focused conservatory. The Garden was also voted the third best botanical garden in the United States by Newsweek Readers-Choice and is the second garden in Virginia to dedicate a Blue Star Memorial to honor service members, both past and present.

- The Chrysler Museum of Art, attracting nearly 190,000 visitors annually, is set to unveil its latest expansion, the Perry Glass Studio.
- The Virginia Zoo, with nearly 400,000 visitors, excels in conservation efforts, welcomes the birth of Letti and the opening of The Turtle Oasis.
- Ocean View Beach Park's expansion is underway, enhancing green space, parking, and amenities.
- Mary Calcott Elementary School received a National Elementary and Secondary Education Act award for significant improvements in SOL passage rates.
- The Norfolk Tides celebrated their best season in 38 years, winning the 2023 Triple-A National Championship.
- The Maury Commodores football team secured the Class 5 state title with an impressive season.
- The City of Norfolk received the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Secretary's Award for the second consecutive year.
- Norfolk was honored with the James Lee Witt Local Award for Excellence in Floodplain Management by The Association of State Floodplain Managers.
- Norfolk has been named a Bronze-level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists, joining 480 communities nationwide.
- Norfolk Works and Tidewater Community College received the Virginia Community College System's 2023 "Outstanding Achievement through a Collaboration" Award.
- Norfolk reached GOLD status as a Bloomberg Foundation WHAT WORKS CITIES, for establishing exceptional data capabilities and for our excellence in data-driven local governance through the Open Data Portal.

Demonstrating our dedication and commitment to community development, we are looking to the future of Military Circle Mall.

We envision a dynamic hub bustling with life and vitality. Centered around community sports, residential, and creative office spaces.

This will transform Norfolk's landscape, fostering a vibrant live-work-play mixed-use community for generations.

Our city thrives with a triple-A bond rating, substantial reserves, and strategic investments.

The State of our City is Strong!

Rooted in resilience, Norfolk weaves diversity into unity, driving us forward.

From safer streets to innovation, our winning spirit prevails.

As we reimagine our city, let's bridge our past, present, and future, converging with history and innovation.

The future of MacArthur Mall demands a bold vision that celebrates our culture, reconnects our city, attracts tourists, and ensures economic vitality.

Let's envision a vibrant mixed-use destination where individuals live, work, play, dine, connect, shop, and convene.

By optimizing existing assets, we aim to solidify Norfolk as a premier hub for hospitality and tourism, elevating our city's appeal to residents and visitors alike.

The Mid-Atlantic's most state-of-the-art mixed-use destination, will be anchored by:

- A world-class 400-room headquarters hotel honoring the military's rich history and Norfolk's role in the conversation of global defense.
- 518,000 square feet of modern high rise living that will offer rental and ownership options, featuring 47,000 square feet in luxury amenities and active ground floor uses.

The site will be accompanied by a pedestrian-oriented promenade, with over 172,000 square feet of destination and community-serving retail.

This two and a half-acre downtown park will create a lively environment for locals and visitors to connect and enjoy authentic flavors of Norfolk in a New City Market with indoor and outdoor spaces.

As we embark on Norfolk's unparalleled journey fusing timeless treasures and modern marvels, we honor our storied history of resilience and transformation.

Where every milestone is a new bridge, and every project writes its own historic chapter of ingenuity and progress.

We proudly stand as a nationally acclaimed hub for arts, maritime, military, and culture.

We embody a city that prioritizes safety, enjoyment, inclusivity, diversity, innovation, and Heritage.

Within our vibrant community, extraordinary individuals craft exceptional moments that resonate far and wide.

We have been steady, a symbol of strength and resilience since 1682.

Let's build on these victories and ensure Norfolk's winning spirit prevails for generations to come.

Let's Keep Winning: Join me in building the City of Now and the city of the future, where innovation thrives, and history is made anew.

Thank you!

God Bless You!

Let's Go Norfolk!