



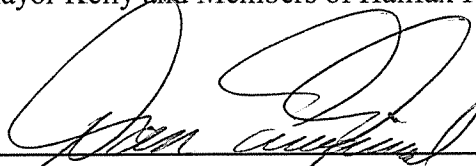
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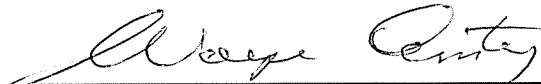
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**Halifax Regional Council**  
**April 18, 2006**

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

  
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Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Twining - Norfolk, Virginia and Halifax Regional Municipality

### **ORIGIN**

In December 2000 the City of Norfolk formally stated their interest in forming a sister city twinning relationship with HRM.

In 2002, Recreation Tourism & Culture initiated discussions with Mayor Kelly about forming a twinning (sister city) relationship with Norfolk, Virginia. As a follow up to those discussions, a delegation lead by Norfolk's Mayor Fraim came to Halifax in 2003 and 2004.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that :

1. The Halifax Regional Municipality form a sister city-twinning relationship with Norfolk, Virginia, to create a greater mutual understanding between the citizens of our two communities through educational, cultural, economic and professional exchange.

## **BACKGROUND**

Halifax Regional Council approved a twinning policy on October 1, 2002. This policy outlines the criteria and protocol to be applied in considering requests from Canadian and international cities who have an interest in forming a twinning relationship with HRM. Halifax Regional Municipality is currently twinned with Hakodate, Japan, Halifax, England and Campeche, Mexico.

In December 2000 the City of Norfolk formally invited HRM to “enter into a dialogue regarding a Sister City affiliation”. This invitation came on behalf of the Norfolk Sister City Association and other citizens interested in twinning with Halifax. Since that time an informal relationship has continued between the two cities, however, HRM has not formally responded to Norfolk with respect to its interest in an ongoing sister city relationship.

The strong ties between the Virginia International Tattoo and the Nova Scotia International Tattoo continue. Producers and directors participate in yearly exchanges and mentorships which result in overall improvements. As well, the Canadian Navy continues to play a significant role in NATO. Headquarters for the NATO fleet is in Norfolk. Thus, naval personnel participate regularly in exchanges and training opportunities.

Halifax and Norfolk Virginia have strong historical and political ties. Both cities came to being during the same period in history. Halifax was founded in 1749 and Norfolk in 1754 as military outposts in British North America. In the American Revolutionary War of 1776, Norfolk broke ties to Great Britain and became part of the United States of America. Halifax, continues its allegiance to the crown to this day. Halifax was incorporated as a city in 1842 and Norfolk’s incorporation took place in 1845. The significant milestones in development and since that decade for both cities have been remarkably similar.

The many commonalities between Halifax and Norfolk are identified in Appendix A attached to this report. To name a few: birthplace of the Navy and historically significant naval port, similar in size, serve as a regional centre, university research centre; entertainment centre; waterfront tourism destination; oceanographic institute; container, inter-modal port and cruise ship destination.

## **DISCUSSION**

A formal twinning relationship between Norfolk and HRM will bring new meaning and increased vigour to the links already established through the two navies, the Virginia International Tattoo and the Nova Scotia International Tattoo. It could also lead to mutual promotion as cultural tourist destinations. Both Cities are participating in Tall Ships 2007. The Greater Halifax Partnership will also be exploring mutually beneficial business ventures with its counterpart in Norfolk. The President of Old Dominion University in Norfolk has expressed an interest in exchanges with Halifax universities. In this respect there are strategic linkages to the HRM Economic development Strategy and the Cultural Plan. Norfolk, and other strong twinning relationships, can provide important benefits to HRM including tourism and other economic development benefits, enhanced

national and international exposure, educational and cross-cultural exchange, and other strategic partnership opportunities.

Further cultural exchanges based upon our similar histories are anticipated including student exchanges promoted by learning institutions in both regions. Saint Mary's University has also expressed interest in working with HRM to facilitate appropriate international development partnerships through twinning relationships. The Halifax Port Authority and the Waterfront Development Corporation have also expressed an interest in developing the sister city relationship between Halifax and Norfolk.

Mayor Kelly has been invited to Norfolk to attend a special event during the Azalea Festival in April aboard the HMCS Halifax. During the ceremony, Canada will be declared Most Favoured Nation within the NATO fleet. Mayor Fraim, Mayor of Norfolk would also like to use the occasion to declare along with Mayor Kelly that Norfolk and Halifax are 'Sister Cities'. This presents a timely opportunity to formally express HRM's commitment to an ongoing mutually beneficial partnership with Norfolk.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

\$10,000 funding for administering HRM's Twinning policy and developing the Twinning program is identified in the Community, Culture & Economic Development (Recreation, Tourism, & Culture) proposed 2006/07 Special Events Reserve budget.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

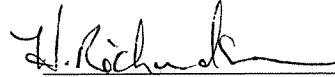
1. Council could decide not to approve the Twinning (sister city) relationship with Norfolk.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix "A" — Application by Norfolk, Virginia for Twinning with the Halifax Regional Municipality which gives a clear indication of the history, development and the cultural backgrounds for the cities.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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**APPENDIX "A"**

Application by the City of Norfolk Virginia for Twinning with Halifax Regional Municipality

**Section One: Your Community**

**1. What is the population of your city? What is the population of the greater urban area that your city is part of?**

Norfolk itself has a population of just over 237,800. The close connection it shares with the six surrounding cities and the presence of a large business community provide it with the unique atmosphere of a bustling metropolis with a small, close-knit community. According to the American Planning Association, Norfolk is the "vibrant, cosmopolitan heart" of the greater urban area of Hampton Roads, which is home to over 1.6 million residents.

**2. Describe the physical geography of your location, including major features such as rivers, mountains, valleys, etc.**

A coastal region surrounded by water on three sides, Norfolk has a mean elevation of twelve feet and is located in southeastern Virginia at the mouth of the James, Elizabeth, and Nansemond rivers. The city is a hub of maritime activity and on a typical day one can see mighty navy vessels sharing the waters with sailboats, merchant ships, and cruise liners. Mile Zero of the Atlantic portion of the scenic Intracoastal Waterway is located on Norfolk's harbor. Whether one strolls downtown or frequents the suburban residential areas, the Chesapeake Bay and numerous surrounding lakes and rivers guarantee a spectacular waterfront view is never far away.

Willoughby Spit, a peninsula created by The Great Coastal Hurricane in 1749, is a residential area and symbol of nature's great power. Along with Naval Station Norfolk and other neighborhoods, it frames Willoughby Bay. Willoughby Spit also helps shield some areas of Norfolk from the Chesapeake Bay, allowing the Elizabeth River to be a center of commerce due to the level of protection it offers from inclement weather and harsh waters. The Lafayette River extends inland from the Elizabeth River's large natural harbor and its branches offer neighborhood residents waterfront views even very far inland.

**3. Describe the distance of your city from main towns or cities. What type of transportation would an international traveler have to use to go from the main point of entry in your region/country to your city?**

Norfolk is 35 miles from the historic settlement town of Williamsburg, VA; 80 miles from Richmond, VA, the state capital; 143 miles from the nation's capital, Washington, D.C.; and 291 miles from New York, New York. A bustling community committed to accommodating a wide range of travelers' needs, Norfolk is home to the newly renovated Norfolk International Airport, Greyhound bus stations, ferry services across the Elizabeth River, and the Hampton Roads

regional transit bus service. Norfolk is linked with neighboring cities through an extensive network of arterial and interstate highways, bridges, tunnels, and bridge-tunnel complexes. The region-wide transit bus system, Hampton Roads Transit, is headquartered in Norfolk, and a light rail service is currently in planning stages. Norfolk is served by the Amtrak railroad line via connecting bus. An international traveler might choose to fly directly or through a connecting flight on one of the nation's many airlines into the Norfolk International Airport or the nearby Newport News/ Williamsburg International Airport, and then simply relax in a bus, taxi cab, or a rented car in order to reach their desired destination.

Norfolk is proud to claim five colleges and universities and the world's largest naval base, which necessitate the presence of excellent transportation systems. The city continues to strive to accommodate the travel needs of its citizens and visitors.

**4. Briefly, what makes your city or region unique? (Interesting, note-worthy facts or characteristics of you community)**

Norfolk grew up on the water and is home to a bustling international trade terminal. Second only to New York, New York with 19% of the East Coast Market Share, this terminal offers Norfolk and the surrounding region access to goods from around the world. By 2010, the Norfolk International Terminal will complete a 300-acre expansion, making it the largest inter-model center in the United States. Norfolk's cargo and coal trade inspired the growth of manufacturing and commerce that has solidified itself in and around the city. The area's World Trade Center is located in the downtown area, as is the North American Headquarters of NATO (North American Trade Organization).

Norfolk is home to the largest naval base in the world, and it has been an icon of the city since the turn of the twentieth century. The city's popular logo, an elegant young mermaid, can be spotted all over the city as a symbol of the city's 300 years of maritime and naval heritage and its modern reputation as a city on the move. In addition to Naval Station Norfolk, the Port Authority, Norfolk-Southern Railway, Norfolk's four internationally recognized research institutes and hospitals, the colleges and universities in the city, and local professional organizations like the Virginia Symphony provide nearly one-third of the jobs in the region. USA Today called Norfolk one of the Top 10 booming downtowns, and Expansion Management Magazine claims it is one of the top 10 markets for business relocation and expansion. Additionally, Forbes 2005 Magazine chose Norfolk as a Top Location for Business & Careers.

Norfolk is more than just a center of business. Much of its seven miles of Chesapeake Bay beachfront and 144 miles of shoreline are located in residential neighborhoods. Its more than 100 tree-lined neighborhood streets provide residents a peaceful retreat from the day's events. Many homeowners enjoy gardening and landscaping and create a community that appreciates the tranquil beauty of the natural world. The strong presence of scientific research facilities put Norfolk at the forefront of medical advancement. Families have access to the best healthcare facilities in the state through cutting-edge research facilities, state of the art hospitals like Sentara Health System and DePaul Medical Center-Bon Secours, and Virginia's only free-

standing, full- service pediatric hospital, Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters. Families and visitors enjoy touring attractions such as the docked battleship U.S.S. Wisconsin; Nauticus; The National Maritime Center, an interactive science and technology center; the Armed Forces Memorial; The Chrysler Museum of Art; the Douglas MacArthur Memorial; and the Virginia Zoological Park. The Norfolk Botanical Gardens, an area full of flower gardens and scenic landscapes, is also a popular attraction for all ages.

Norfolk's nightlife is a central feature of the city's entertainment scene. Norfolk offers countless opportunities to enjoy great food, live music, and performances. One can enjoy a family atmosphere in an outdoor concert venue like Town Point Park, which offers a backdrop of the Elizabeth River and all types of boats cruising on the water. The Norva, hailed by performers as a favorite for its acoustic brilliance, is a more intimate concert setting in downtown Norfolk with plenty of room to dance, socialize, or quietly enjoy a performance. Norfolk is home to the Virginia Opera, the Virginia Stage Company, and the Virginia Symphony, all of which have been widely recognized for their superior talent and performances.

Tourists vacationing on cruise liners that dock at the terminal in downtown Norfolk combine with locals to give the city's music scene a flavorful mix of traditional and innovative tastes. A theatrical favorite, the Norfolk Hurrah Players perform with a cast whose average age is less than fifteen. While exploring the city, visitors have the chance to experience the fine dining restaurants, cafés, international cuisine, and casual seafood restaurants that line Norfolk's main streets.

The many educational institutions located in Norfolk conduct great amounts of research. Whether a student is interested in studying tidal patterns or marine organisms in the Old Dominion Oceanography department or seeking cures to disease and disability at the Eastern Virginia Medical Schools, he or she is certain to find academic challenges and rewarding opportunities at Norfolk's educational institutions. Norfolk State University, Tidewater Community College, and Virginia Wesleyan College are located in Norfolk and offer a wide variety of academic disciplines and nationally recognized sports teams.

Education in Norfolk is not limited to the classroom. Jamestown, the first English settlement in America founded in 1607, Yorktown, and historic Williamsburg are in close proximity to Norfolk and offer children and adults the chance to extend their understanding of history beyond traditional textbooks. Daily reenactments of colonial life at these historic sites bring history alive and provide countless opportunities to expand visitors' understandings of life in historic times. In Norfolk itself, historic societies have preserved some of the first houses built in the city and have opened them for public tours. Additionally, visitors of all ages enjoy an immersion in artistic creativity as they watch artists at work inside the newly re-opened D'art center.

**5. Describe the characteristics of your community, providing information about the human-made physical features and ethnic or cultural base of your citizens (give a break down of your city's population).**

Norfolk strives to embody the ideal of a bustling metropolis that still retains a small, hometown atmosphere. Visitors and locals easily walk the stretch of downtown Norfolk's waterfront, from the *Wisconsin* battleship docked on the waterfront past downtown apartments to Nauticus, an educational museum full of displays about marine life and home to a new National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration exhibit. Nauticus has also recently come alive with new docks for cruise ships and refurbished exhibits. The walk continues with a brilliant view of the Elizabeth River as one nears the Town Point Park concert and festival venue and then moves on past docked sailboats to Waterside, where locally owned clubs, restaurants, and shops are located near hotels in the heart of downtown.

Naval Station Norfolk provides a spectacle as servicemen make repairs to the mighty vessels in one of the eleven aircraft hangars or thirteen piers found on the base. Historic neighborhoods lined with ancient oak trees surround the area, and many homes are passed down through generations of families. Starter homes, loft apartments downtown, and other new developments around the area encourage a diverse group of professionals, retirees, and families to call Norfolk home. Norfolk residents are almost guaranteed their drive to work will include a scenic waterfront view, and the many highways and boulevards that link Norfolk to its neighbors provide for safe and efficient commuting. The city is linked to the Delmarva Peninsula by the seventeen-mile long Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, which was a modern engineering marvel when it opened in 1964. Norfolk is linked to cities across the Chesapeake Bay and Elizabeth River by bridge, tunnel, and ferry services. These excellent forms of transportation have helped facilitate the emergence of the Port of Hampton Roads, which has risen to prominence as one of the principle commercial ports in the United States.

Additionally, excellent national academic standings draw young couples who are seeking a quality public education system for their children. Many of these schools' interiors have been renovated so they remain on the cutting edge of technology, but they maintain a traditional façade that adds to the small-town atmosphere of the community.

Norfolk is very proud of its ethnic and cultural diversity. The population is relatively equal in the division between Caucasians (48.4%) and African-Americans (44.1%), while the Asian community constitutes 2.8% of citizens. Males constitute 51.1% and females make up 48.9% of the population, and the 25-34 age group constitutes the largest demographic in the city (15.6%).

**6. What are the principal economic activities of your community (e.g. Agriculture, local products, industries, services, tourism, etc.)?**

The military operation at Naval Station Norfolk employs 66,576 servicemen and women. In the private sector, the greatest percent of the population is in the service industry (40,300),



followed by those affiliated with the health care industry (20,248). Retail trade, finance and real estate, and transportation and warehousing also claim a large percent of the population.

Norfolk is a city of trade and commerce. The Port of Virginia processes over 14.7 million tons of cargo and is continuing to grow rapidly. With nineteen percent of East Coast Market share, Norfolk's port is second only to New York, New York. In the past five years, more than \$5 billion have been invested in Norfolk. Its reputation as a pro-business city encourages private corporations to locate headquarters in the city, and Norfolk's flagship corporate citizen, Norfolk Southern Railroad, reported record revenues from its operations in 2004. Norfolk ranks eighth among the Top U.S. Cities for European Expansion, and private corporate investment continues to enhance the city's growth.

Norfolk has rapidly become an attractive visitor destination. With cultural centers like the Chrysler Museum of Art, Nauticus, and the Harrison Opera House, in addition to waterfront hotels, great downtown shopping, and weekend cultural events like the Norfolk Jazz Festival and Harbor Fest, the city is a hub of activity that draws tourists and locals alike.

#### **7. What level of education is available in your community?**

From early childhood education to graduate level research, Norfolk offers a wide range of opportunities that span ages and abilities to provide the best education to students in the area. Norfolk is home to Old Dominion University, Norfolk State University, Tidewater Community College, Virginia Wesleyan College, and the Medical College of Hampton Roads. These universities and colleges conduct undergraduate and graduate-level research that keeps the region on the forefront of medical, technological, and theoretical advancement. The colleges and universities work closely with each other and with the high schools and grade schools in the area to offer the most learning opportunities for every student.

Norfolk has an excellent public school system with five high schools, nine middle schools, and thirty-five elementary schools. Special education programs, English as a Second Language programs, and many others are offered in the public school system. The public high schools also offer courses for gifted students. These courses are taught in the high schools and allow students who excel in academics to earn college credit. For other students, vocational courses are offered through the public high schools. Numerous post-secondary-level vocational schools are located throughout the region as well. For students gifted in the arts, the Virginia Governor's School Program offers classes in dance, theater, art, and music. These students conduct exhibitions, shows, and recitals and produce some of the finest quality work in the country.

From elementary school through high school, children interested in playing a musical instrument have the chance to take daily lessons as part of their educational curriculum. Teachers hired from the Virginia Symphony instruct students in stringed, percussion, and woodwind instruments and heighten their interest in pursuing excellence in musical performance. Finally, Norfolk's location provides students with the opportunity to experience history firsthand as they travel in groups to historic sites like Jamestown and Williamsburg to learn more about

life in colonial America. There are eight private schools that range from elementary to high school education levels in the city. Preschool education is also a priority in Norfolk. There are numerous early- childhood educational care facilities available to families for either full or half-days. Most of Norfolk's residents have graduated from high school (78.4%) and 19.6% hold bachelor's degrees. The many institutions of higher learning draw academics to Norfolk, and over 7% of residents hold a graduate degree.

**8. What leisure facilities and activities are present in your community (e.g. sports, cultural centers, libraries, services for youth and the elderly, societies, associations and clubs)?**

Norfolk is a city where families settle for generations and also an area of transit due to the United States Navy's presence. Naval Station Norfolk opens its doors to recreational sports teams that use their facilities on the weekends, the local YMCA and other exercise facilities inspire a communal emphasis on good health, and the colleges and universities welcome local children and adolescents into their summer sports, art, theater, and dance summer camps and winter sports teams led by collegiate students.

Private recreation teams and arts facilities are also available through local yacht and country clubs and fine arts centers. Norfolk offers twenty- three recreation centers with four life guarded pools in addition to the three public beach parks that employ lifeguards. The Lakewood Dance/ Music Center serves as the headquarters for dance, music, exercise, and fitness courses offered by the city. For those interested in the arts, the D'art Center is an excellent facility for artists and observers alike. Visitors can watch artists at work and also enjoy their pieces on display in their highly accessible studios. Three public golf courses, five public boat ramps, and ten public dog parks offer opportunities for recreation as well as relaxation.

Senior centers, societies for a range of interests, youth groups at local churches and schools, and committees that strive to improve the quality of life in Norfolk abound. Whatever one's interests, an organization most likely exists to expand his or her knowledge of the subject and to connect that person with other enthusiasts. For senior citizens, high- quality assisted living facilities and nursing homes are easily found in the city. Two specialized senior citizen centers can be found in Norfolk and local recreation centers host eleven senior clubs throughout the city.

Just as a club or organization exists for most any hobby or interest, cultural festivals abound for all ages. From Harborfest to the Norfolk Jazz Festival to the Bayou Boogaloo, the city offers a wide range of public festivals and activities in which visitors and citizens take part often. The downtown Town Point Park venue hosts many of these festivals, but some can be found in theaters located in residential areas or in local churches and outdoor public areas. Plenty of restaurants welcome locals and visitors, offering nearly everything from fine dining to causal fresh seafood.

In addition, unique landmarks like the Chrysler Museum of Art, which is home to traditional, contemporary, and photographic exhibits, Nauticus, the Virginia Zoological Park, the Harrison Opera House, the MacArthur Memorial and other memorials in downtown Norfolk, the

Wisconsin Battle Ship, and the Navy Base itself offer cultural enrichment for all ages with a spectrum of interests. The Virginia Symphony offers indoor and outdoor concerts with the chance to see guest performers such as internationally recognized cellist Yo- Yo Ma. At Scope, the architecturally innovative domed arena crowds gathered to see rank formation and marching exercises at the International Tattoo. Norfolk libraries present patrons with the opportunity to explore any kind of literature, from research journals to children's books to government records and DVD rentals. The city's eleven libraries, not to mention the library resources of local colleges and universities, offer cultural enrichment, research opportunities, and resources for pleasure reading for all ages. Families find it easy to get involved in the community with over 414 churches serving all denominations and five Neighborhood Service Centers available.

Norfolk's historical heritage is remembered in the preservation of historical houses throughout the city. Visitors can tour these houses and watch as members of historical societies reenact the daily activities of early residents. The city is in close proximity to the historic areas of Jamestown, Yorktown, and Williamsburg, so visitors also have the chance to immerse themselves in the history that is reenacted daily there as well. As visitors tour the colonial stores, farmhouses, and homes, they gain a broad perspective of life in America's first years.

Sports fans also have much to look forward to when visiting Norfolk. With the choice of seeing collegiate sailing, baseball, track and field, field hockey, basketball and other top ranked teams, the triple- A Tides baseball team, the Admirals Ice Hockey team, and other independent teams, visitors and tourists find plenty of entertainment and satisfaction in the local sports scene.

**9. What communications facilities are available in your community (e.g. newspapers, radio, television, telecommunications, public Internet access)?**

Norfolk is home to four of the five affiliate stations available in the area, CBS, ABC, the Public Broadcasting Network, and Fox/WB network news. Local news television stations are also prevalent and the Virginian- Pilot Newspaper has been in print since 1865. Seven other local weekly magazines such as the PortFolio Weekly provide editorial opinions and an outlet for cultural interests. Additionally, the local colleges and universities publish their own student-staffed newspapers. The twenty- nine radio stations available provide listeners choices of a wide range of music in addition to National Public Radio news. There are also local stations that broadcast both news and music. Many local shops and restaurants have wireless internet available to patrons, and the airport and select other locations provide kiosks with internet access and e-mail capabilities.

**10. What are the significant historical events or personalities of your community?**

Norfolk was established as "Norfolk Towne" in 1682. In 1754, Royal Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie presented the silver mace, an ancient symbol of royal authority, to Norfolk, which was a Borough at that time. On New Year's Day during the Revolutionary War in 1776, Lord Dunmore opened fire on Norfolk and many buildings were destroyed by fire. Colonial

troops then completely demolished the Norfolk Borough so the British could not occupy the area. Norfolk was the only American town to be completely destroyed during the Revolutionary War, and today a British cannonball still rests in the wall of St. Paul's Church. The War of 1812 impacted Norfolk when the British attacked Craney Island but were successfully repelled in 1813.

Norfolk became a City when it was incorporated in 1845. Following the beginning of the civil war, the first ironclad ship was built in the Norfolk Navy Yard. In 1862, the first battle between ironclads, the Merrimac and the Monitor, was fought in Hampton Roads in waters off the present day Naval Station Norfolk. Residents and visitors celebrated the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jamestown's founding at the Norfolk Jamestown Exposition in 1907. Aviation history was made in 1910 when Eugene Ely successfully launched his Curtiss biplane from the deck of the cruiser Birmingham and landed on the beach at Willoughby Spit. In 1917, 1400 sailors marched to the new U.S. Naval Operating Base and Training Station built in Norfolk. In 1952, the Downtown Norfolk- Portsmouth Bridge- Tunnel opened. A modern engineering marvel, it was followed by the Mid- Town Tunnel in 1962 and a second Downtown Tunnel in 1986. In 1992, the Monitor- Merrimac Bridge Tunnel opened, completing the loop of interstate highways in Hampton Roads. From 1971 to 1999, many landmarks like Scope, Nauticus, Harbor Park, The Chrysler Museum, Chrysler Hall, and MacArthur Center Mall were opened and renovated to become the icons of Norfolk they are today.

**11. Briefly describe the climate pattern in your city. What is the best time of the year to visit?**

Norfolk has a historically moderate climate tempered by its proximity to the Gulf Stream. It is located on the same latitude as the top of the African continent, and at that distance from the Equator, it experiences mild winters and temperate summers. The average summer temperature is 79 degrees Fahrenheit, and the average winter temperature is 38 degrees Fahrenheit. The overall percentage of sunshine is 65%. Children consider school closings due to snow or icy roads a surprise because heavy snow is relatively uncommon. Since Norfolk is surrounded by water on three sides, summers often become humid and the air holds a great deal of moisture after a rainstorm. Hurricane season lasts from June through November, and while tropical storms and summer rains are common, a destructive hurricane is rather rare.

By nature of being a maritime city, much of Norfolk's events and attractions are outside. While locales and tourists frequent museums, movie theaters, and shopping centers for entertainment on rainy or cold days, few activities compare to the chance to stroll down the Norfolk waterfront on a warm day listening to live music in the background. Summer, especially during the months of June and July, brings Norfolk alive with festivals, outdoor concerts, beautiful weather, and outdoor seating in restaurants.

**12. Briefly describe how your system of local government works. (Is the mayor elected? ...)**

Norfolk operates under a Council/ Manager form of government. This government structure combines strong political leadership, representative democracy through elected officials, and professional management. Council members are elected from one of the five small wards and one of two superwards that overlay them. The Mayor is elected by City Council. All powers are vested in Council, including the power to hire a professionally trained and educated City Manager to handle the delivery of public services and operations of the city. The concentration of power in the elected city council establishes a representative form of government. Council members are part- time and serve as the policy- making board of Norfolk's government.