

The Collaboratory

An Initiative To Advance Norfolk's Unified Messaging

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The Norfolk Collaboratory

Every decade or so, U.S. cities experience a golden “moment in time” in their natural evolution as a place to live and work. If this is packaged and promoted right, it can change a region’s “reputation trajectory” as one of America’s most preferred places to live, work and play. The City of Norfolk’s golden moment is here!

When viewed collectively, the City of Norfolk’s real estate development projects for 2014-2015 (Waterside, Kroc Center, Slover Memorial Library, Consolidated Courts Complex and dozens more), coupled with the growth of restaurants, entertainment and cultural amenities, are creating an opportunity for Norfolk to tell its story in a more relevant and seamless manner where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

To package this opportunity right, the City of Norfolk’s marketing organizations agree that they must coordinate messaging to advance a consistent perspective on what Norfolk is today and where the City is headed. Therefore, the City of Norfolk, Festevents and Downtown Norfolk Council have joined forces to do just that!

Through an inclusive planning initiative named the ***Norfolk Collaboratory***, a central, unifying message blue print is being developed – a brand message architecture. This document presents SIR’s recommended first draft or “straw man” language for this message architecture. It has been labeled a “straw man” as it is offered as a starting place for this conversation.

We welcome everyone’s feedback and suggestions. Please help us share Norfolk’s story in the most relevant and compelling way possible.

SIR's Overall Brand Message Architecture

SIR's Blueprint for Brand Message Architecture
Has Seven Core Component Parts

1. **Purpose:** *It's not what you do, or how you do it, but "why" you do what you do.*
2. **Positioning Statement:** *How you want consumers and other audiences to know and understand your brand – the one sentence or thought they keep in their minds that helps "position" you relative to others.*
3. **Strategic Word Choice:** *Rationale for key words and phrases in the Positioning Statement.*
4. **Promise Statement:** *What you say to your audiences so they understand your position, answering the "what's in this for me" question.*
5. **Reasons To Believe:** *Proof points for why audiences will believe your Promise and accept your Position Statement.*
6. **Personality:** *Not "what you say" but "how you say it" – the tone and manner you project about your brand.*
7. **Tagline:** *The word or phrase that expresses the gestalt of all of the aforementioned components.*

1. Purpose:

*It's not what you do, or how you do it,
but why you do what you do.*

The City of Norfolk is developing a new sense of community – a place where passionate people actively shape the future of their neighborhoods, economy, careers and culture.

2. Positioning Statement:

How you want consumers and other audiences to know and understand your brand – the one sentence or thought they keep in their minds that helps “position” you relative to others.

The City of Norfolk is America's vibrant, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the most fun and livable waterfront community in the world.

3. Strategic Word Choice: *Rationale for key words and phrases in the Position Statement.*

*Define the place. Make it city-wide.
Don't let people assume downtown.*

The **City of Norfolk** is America's vibrant, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the most fun and livable waterfront community in the world.

*Pre-emptively position
Norfolk as a U.S. asset.*

The City of Norfolk is **America's** vibrant, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the most fun and livable waterfront community in the world.

Reinforce vitality.

The City of Norfolk is America's **vibrant**, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the most fun and livable waterfront community in the world.

*Recognize the Navy and shipping industry.
Reposition the port, as not just an active
harbor, but as a historic landmark.*

The City of Norfolk is America's vibrant, **heritage port city** where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the most fun and livable waterfront community in the world.

City of Norfolk includes everyone.

The City of Norfolk is America's vibrant, heritage port city where **people of all backgrounds and ages** are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the most fun and livable waterfront community in the world.

All of Norfolk's current projects are the latest chapter of its timeless DNA – resiliency and people working together to transform their environment. Norfolk is a City of Doers . . . and Makers!

The City of Norfolk is America's vibrant, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are **actively transforming** their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the most fun and livable waterfront community in the world.

Transforming their environment is all-inclusive – neighborhoods, economy, and culture. These three words are intended to represent overall society. (For example, “economy” represents businesses, start-ups, jobs, etc.)

The City of Norfolk is America’s vibrant, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their **neighborhoods, economy, and culture** into the most fun and livable waterfront community in the world.

Visitor benefit – to create a place where people want to hang out.

The City of Norfolk is America's vibrant, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the **most fun** and livable waterfront community in the world.

Residential benefit – to create a place where people want to live.

The City of Norfolk is America's vibrant, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the **most** fun and **livable** waterfront community in the world.

The City of Norfolk's number one differentiator is the water.

The City of Norfolk is America's vibrant, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the most fun and livable **waterfront** community in the world.

People crave community.

The City of Norfolk is America's vibrant, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the most fun and livable waterfront **community** in the world.

*This position is aspirational - a “BHAG:”
Big Hairy Audacious Goal**

The City of Norfolk is America’s vibrant, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the most fun and livable waterfront community **in the world.**

Shorter Version: Position Statement

How you want consumers and other audiences to know and understand your brand – the one sentence or thought they keep in their minds to position you relative to others.

Norfolk is America's
heritage port city where people are
transforming their neighborhoods,
economy, and culture into the most
fun and livable waterfront
Community in the world.

4. Promise Statement:

What you say to your audiences so they understand your position, answering the “what’s in this for me” question.

The City of Norfolk is **where you can easily make your own . . .**
business, neighborhood, education, friends, family, (you fill in) . . . happen
in the most fun and livable
Waterfront community in the world.

5. Reasons to Believe:

Proof points for why audiences will believe your Promise and accept your Position Statement.

Position Statement: The City of Norfolk is America's vibrant, heritage port city where people of all backgrounds and ages are actively transforming their neighborhoods, economy, and culture into the most fun and livable waterfront community in the world.

Promise: Where you can easily make your own . . . *(you fill in)*

The Past

The City of Norfolk has a 400 year heritage of reinvention and transformation.

Today

People are transforming Norfolk, once again.
(List the latest array of projects and initiatives)

Future

Norfolk is becoming the most fun and livable waterfront community in the world.
(List designations and recognition)

6. Personality:

Not “what you say” but “how you say it”

– the tone and manner you project about your brand.

Welcoming Vibrant
Inclusive Artistic
Hip *Transformative*
Organic Innovative
Urban Coastal Authentic

7. Tagline:

The word or phrase that expresses the gestalt of all of the aforementioned components.

The Collaboratory is not charged with creating a new tagline like *“Life Celebrated Daily”* or iconic image like the *Norfolk Mermaid*. The Collaboratory’s mission is to provide consensus-driven messaging to help everyone – *all of the City’s marketing organizations, residents and businesses*, advance the City of Norfolk’s overall brand in a more consistent manner.

Norfolk’s brand has been, is, and always will be, the mosaic of impressions that everyone presents to the world. Thus, the verbal and visual expressions of Norfolk’s brand are the responsibility of everyone.

It is our hope that when this new message architecture is finalized, a growing number of these expressions will help the City of Norfolk become, and be recognized as, *the most fun and livable waterfront community in the world*.