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Elizabeth River Trail Foundation Announces Major Enhancements and Investments
Goal is to make ERT the most iconic urban riverfront trail in the country

NORFOLK, Va. (April 2018) The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation announced today significant investment partners for its \$4 million capital campaign. Lead investors include the City of Norfolk (\$500,000); Sentara Healthcare (\$500,000), TowneBank (\$250,000) and PRA Group (\$250,000). Additional major donors include Children's Health System, Landmark Foundation, Virginia Port Authority, Grow, Kaufman & Canoles, Cottrell Contracting, Downtown Norfolk Council, Southern Bank Foundation and SL Nusbaum Realty Co. The investments will be used for future enhancements to the Elizabeth River Trail.

Currently, the 10.5-mile trail connects 28 neighborhoods within a five-minute walk. The ERT focuses on green infrastructure and restoration along the trail that hugs the Elizabeth River. The trail has multiple uses including walking, running and biking. It comprises 11 sections and 11 trailheads from Norfolk State to NIT Terminals. Highlights of the ERT include Harbor Park, Downtown Norfolk, Freemason, Sentara Loop, Fort Norfolk, Chelsea, West Ghent, Lambert's Point, Old Dominion University, Larchmont and Lochhaven.

"Experience has shown that trails similar to the Elizabeth River Trail enhance the value of our communities and attract visitors," said Mayor Kenneth Cooper Alexander. "The City of Norfolk is pleased to be a major part of this initiative, and we will continue to work with the Foundation to ensure that these improvements benefit residents and visitors."

"The goal of the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation is to make ERT the most iconic urban riverfront trail in the country," said Charles McPhillips, ERT Foundation chairman. "A dramatically improved and beautified Elizabeth River Trail will be something for all of us to take great pride in. It will improve the quality of life by providing a healthy and wholesome recreational outlet for families from all walks of life."

The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation's capital campaign funds will be used to improve the trail and create and install important amenities along the entire 10.5 miles. These include trailheads, shelters, fitness equipment and kayak launches. Additionally, plans call for improved parking, public art, landscaping, historic interpretation, bike repair stations, charging stations and lighting. These plans will not only maximize accessibility, but will ensure that the trail experience is safe, educational and unforgettable for people of all ages, interests and abilities, all of which are critical to maximizing usage. The planned enhancements have been conceived to match the Foundation's vision for a trail full of young families with strollers or

children on their first bicycles, walkers, avid runners and cyclists and all demographics in-between.

“The goal of the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation is to make ERT the most iconic urban riverfront trail in the country,” said Charles McPhillips, ERT Foundation chairman. “A dramatically improved and beautified Elizabeth River Trail will be something for all of us to take great pride in. It will improve the quality of life by providing a healthy and wholesome recreational outlet for families from all walks of life.”

Planned improvements and amenities of the ERT include:

- Trail signage package with maps and distances (11 large /50+ medium)
- Trail lighting
- Trail surface improvements and increased path width
- Trail landscaping
- Trail Ambassador program
- 5 kayak launches / with kayak storage
- 2 large playgrounds
- 2 luminous paths
- 1 Interpretive environmental signage package (full length of trail) and audio tour
- 1 Interpretive historical signage package (full length of trail) and audio tour
- 3 fitness equipment stations
- 2 medium playgrounds
- 5 small playgrounds
- 8 bike maintenance stations
- 7 shade structure/charging stations
- 7 digital counters
- 20 bike racks
- 25 benches
- 20 trash and recycling stations
- 10 public art pieces
- 10 picnic tables
- Website with maps, rides and event information
- Social Media – Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for user engagement

The ERT highlights the unique characteristics of Norfolk’s prized waterfront and its historical significance. Along the trail are anchor institutions, major employers and economic generators, and the value of the land and properties along the trail is currently assessed at \$2.25 billion. For more information, visit www.elizabethrivertrail.com.

Elizabeth River Trail Weekend Events

https://www.facebook.com/pg/norfolkERT/events/?ref=page_internal)

Saturday, April 7 – National Opening Day for Trails

The announcement coincides with [Opening Day for Trails](#), and people across the nation will kick off the spring trail season by hitting their favorite trails for a walk, run, ride or special event. This nationwide event is organized by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

1-5 pm Norfolk Brewery Tour

Meet at Benchtop Brewing Company and ride along the Elizabeth River Trail to O’Connor Brewing Co., Bold Mariner, and Smartmouth Brewing Company.

Sunday, April 8

10 am Elizabeth River Yoga at Plum Point Park. Hosted by Bhav Brigade. (RAIN DATE)

Noon-1 pm, Tour de ORF

This leisurely bike ride is appropriate for all skill levels. The route will begin and end at Smartmouth Brewing Company. The ride is free, but donations are requested to benefit local waterways charities.

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