



FY 23 - 24

FOUNDATION IMPACT REPORT

Table of Contents

- 3 Letter from the Director
- 5 Mission & Vision Statement
- 6 Equity Statement
- 8 2023-24 Board of Directors
- 9 Committees
- 10 Foundation Awards
- 12 Annual Evaluation Metrics
- 16 Programs & Volunteers
- 19 Sponsors & Donors



GREETINGS TRAIL LOVERS,

As the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation enters its eighth year, we are at an exciting time of growth, local and national recognition, record usership, and impactful partnerships and we have you to thank for that.

At this pivotal time, we are blazing a trail with a clear direction of who we are as a Foundation and where we are headed. To serve more of Norfolk and to connect regionally are priorities for our board of directors, and I am honored to lead this Foundation with their dedication, and the work of committee members and volunteers who encourage us forward every day.

In this impact report, you will find the accomplishments you've made possible over the past fiscal year. We are proud of our first Economic Impact Study showing the ERT provided \$18.7 million in annual economic output to the City of Norfolk and that the City of Norfolk can be proud that its \$150,000 grant award to the ERT Foundation is reaping a 4.5:1 return in investment!

Our work over the past year has included the installation of necessary amenities including our first hydration station and bench installed at Jeff Robertson Park, a covered bench and rain barrel with native plantings installed at the Pocket Park on Lovitt Ave., a 5G upgrade of all our trail Eco Counters, the installation of the Born Learning Trail at Plum Point Park and much more.

Looking ahead we will focus on connecting north to Naval Station Norfolk and east to the Virginia Beach Trail, by way of community input and feedback. Additionally, we'll explore trail loops and connections that make sense for the needs of Norfolk and the trails master plan, all while continuing to enhance our current 10.5 miles. Our Foundation will stand on the pillars of Planning, Programming, and Advocacy as we put our vision into action by working directly with communities to hear what they want.

None of the impact reflected in this report could have been accomplished without the vision and leadership of our board,

committed donors, corporate partners, trailblazers just like you who use this trail, and countless volunteers who support trail beautification, cleanups, outreach, advocacy and so much more.

We are tremendously grateful for partnerships because when it comes down to it, this trail exists to connect us to each other, to cultivate relationships, to build bridges, to better know our community and those who live in it.

This year we dedicate our impact report to two members of the community that we lost this past year:

John "Dubby" Wynne, (7/6/45-10/26/23) was instrumental in the ERT Foundation's capital campaign in 2018 through the Wynne Family Foundation. His philanthropic spirit and belief that this trail would serve for the betterment of our community has left a lasting impact on us and our region.

Duane Robinson, (7/13/64-5/14/24), a trail ambassador, dedicated volunteer, avid cyclist, dear friend, and our 2022 Volunteer of the Year, Robinson embodied the motto "see a need, fill a need," and have fun doing it. He led group rides, pitched in on planting projects, never missed a litter cleanup, and rarely missed a day out on the trail.

Donors and volunteers are the backbone of any non-profit and the ERT Foundation is grateful to have been loved by these two.

With gratitude, I'll meet you on the trail,

Kindra Greene, Executive Director



MISSION STATEMENT

The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation plans, programs, and advocates for the Elizabeth River Trail connecting Naval Station Norfolk to the Virginia Beach Trail.

VISION STATEMENT

The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation will be a global model of waterfront trail resilience and education that supports connected communities, inclusive infrastructure, and economic development as part of a regional trail system.

Equity Statement

Something FOR Everyone. The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation believes that access to trails and open spaces are a fundamental right for all. The ERT has the power to connect communities and provide public access to our working waterfront.

The ERT seeks to provide access and amenities to people along the Trail to meet the specific needs of each community. Inequities exist in the built environment, and it is our responsibility to bring equity to every trail section, trailhead, and amenity.

The ERT commits to cultivating an inclusive and welcoming culture among its staff, volunteers, board members, community partners and program participants. We approach this work with respect, openness, and a willingness to learn and adapt.

ERT volunteers and committee members are expected to represent the Foundation in a way that supports and enhances our mission and exemplifies the above equity statement. ERT volunteers and committee members will behave with integrity, respect, kindness, and compassion, to everyone they interact with while representing the ERT.



2023 - 2024 Board of Directors

**denotes ERT Executive Committee positions*

Barbara Benesh*

Founder & Design Principal — B. Grace Design
Co-Chair of Fundraising Committee

Barry Bishop

Community Leader

Tim Faulkner

President & CEO, The Breeden Company

John Garrett*

Vice President of Finance & Development, CDA
Vice Chair*

Giovanna Genard*

VP of External Affairs & Marketing Leader,
PRA Group, Board Secretary*

Jackie Glass

Virginia State Delegate

Destini Harrell*

Community Connector & Strategist, The
Blessed Rogue LLC., Chair of DEI Committee*

Dr. Michael Hooper

Chief Medical Officer — Sentara Norfolk
General Hospital

Rachel McCall*

Vice President of Strategic Initiatives,
Downtown Norfolk Council, Chair of Events
Committee*

Andria McClellan

Norfolk City Council

Chuck McPhillips

Member, Kaufman & Canoles

Kevin Murphy*

Norfolk City Planning Commission
Immediate Past Chair*

Christine Neikirk*

Community Engagement, Smartmouth
Brewing Co., ERT Foundation Chair*

Peter Oberle

Community Leader

Trista N. Pope

Deputy City Manager, City of Norfolk

Mel Price*

Principal, Work Program Architects
Chair of Master Planning Committee*

Liz Scheessele

PE, CFM, ENV SP, Stormwater Group Leader,
Timmons Group

Dr. Camden Wood Selig

Director of Athletics, Old Dominion University

Ann Stokes

Ann P. Stokes, Landscape Architects

Chris Uiterwyk*

Founder/CEO, IPConfigure, Inc., Chair of
Marketing Committee*

Melody Webb

Director of Athletics, Norfolk State University

Dr. Theresa Whibley

Community Leader

EX-OFFICIO

City of Norfolk

Parks & Recreation, Stephn Zurek
Transit, Anna Dewey

Norfolk Festevents

Ted Baroody

Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization

Robert A. Crum Jr. & Pavithra Parthasarathi

Elizabeth River Project

Marjorie Mayfield Jackson

Greater Norfolk Corporation

Linda Peck

City of Norfolk

Parks & Recreation, Stephen Zurek

STAFF

Kindra Greene

Executive Director

Morgan Willett

Assistant Director

2023-2024 ERT Committees

Committees are the backbone of the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation. These volunteers move our mission forward by contributing valuable feedback and insight as well as giving of their time, talent, and expertise. Committees are made up of at least one Board Member and non-board committee volunteers.

DEI

Destini Harrell, Dorian Allen, Erik Barrett, Ariel Barrientos,
Caleb DeJonge, Jay Grant, Kyle Gilmer, Mulat Hilton, Vince
Hodges,, Jasmin Jameson, Angela Johnson, Sharon Manana,
Chris Neikirk, Johnathan Ray

EVENTS

Rachel McCall, Rhashida Bess, Brian Bowes, Ashley Cilenti,
Fleta Jackson, Lynette Mason, Chris Neikirk, Karen Price
Owen, Lexi Shimkonis, Lynne Valdes

FUNDRAISING

Barbara Benesh, Barry Bishop, John Garrett, Bob Gerris, Aria
Maisey, Lynette Mason, Andria McClellan, Chuck McPhillips,
Kevin Murphy, Chris Neikirk, Mel Price, Gigi Tysinger

MARKETING

Chris Uiterwyk, Stacey Crawshaw, Jay Grant, Cindy Mackey,
Chris Neikirk, Elisabeth Rusch, Ed Ware, Melody Webb

MASTER PLANNING

Mel Price, Dorian Allen, Barry Bishop, Anne Christie, Richard Counselman,
Kevin Curran, Keith Darrow, Anna Dewey, Richard Diamonstein, Christy
Fisher, Kyle Gilmer, Peter Johnston, Sharon Manana, Rachel McCall, Chris
Neikirk, Peter Oberle, Keith Oliver, Susan Pollock, Catie Sauer, Liz Scheessele,
Liz Schleeper, Cindy Shurling, Jackie Stein, Ann Stokes, Paul Trapp, Vince
Valdez, Terry Whibley

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Barry Bishop, Chris Anderson, Ryon Clifton, Jade Edwards, John Garrett,
Chris Neikirk, Mark Pryor, Greg Tomchick, Brian Waterfield

DID YOU KNOW...

- FY 23-24 Total Committee Hours = **612**
- FY23-24 Total Value of Committee Time = **\$104,575**



Along with the many hours committee members spend supporting the ERT with the planning, fundraising, marketing, and financial oversight of the Foundation, committee members regularly help with trail beautification, maintenance, and events.



Foundation Awards

- 2024 Awarded CoVA Best of Award - Best Place to Hike-Walk, Bronze
- 2024 Named tHRive Young Professional's Organization of the year
- 2024 Awarded Hampton Roads Chamber Small Business of the Year
- 2024 Received Commending Resolution from Delegate Phil Hernandez
- Awarded the CoVA Business 2023 Giving Back Award
- 2023 Awarded Sustained Distinguished Performance River Star Business by Elizabeth River Project

Foundation Accomplishments

- Poetry on the Trail partnership with Dahlgren Railroad Heritage Trail
- Larchmont Deed of Dedication for new trailhead
- Retain Your Rain Grant for covered bench and rain barrel
- Elizabeth River Trail added to MyNorfolk.org
- Presented at Vault, Virginia Tourism, Virginia Outdoor Parks and Rec Society, and Urban Land Institute conferences
- Charity Navigator score 4-stars and 86%

Progress On Annual Evaluation Metrics

ANNUAL OPERATING FUNDS RAISED MINIMUM GOAL OF \$200,000:

- Corporate donations: \$66,345.62
- Individual donations: \$100,771.57
- Merchandise Sales: \$5,462
- Interest Income: \$27,861
- Grants:
 - \$150,000 City of Norfolk
 - \$10,000 REI Cooperative Action Fund
 - \$10,000 LISC Hampton Roads - for Economic Impact Study
 - \$8,750 Geico Philanthropic Fund
 - \$5,000 Norfolk Southern Hampton Roads Community Fund
 - \$5,000 Wetlands Watch/Virginia Outdoors Foundation
 - \$5,000 Economic Development Authority - for Economic Impact Study
 - 1,500 Office of Resilience Retain your Rain Mini Grant
- **Total Grants: \$195,250**

In 2023, in conjunction with the 30th anniversary of the original Elizabeth River Trail committee, we launched a **"Celebrate Every Mile"** recurring monthly donation campaign. \$10.50/mo \$21.00/mo \$42.00/month and \$105/mo

- **Total of all unds Received FY23 - 24: \$395,690.19**

ADDITIONAL TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS:

- A bench was added to Jeff Robertson Park
- Regular monthly **maintenance of five sites** along the ERT are being maintained by the Norfolk Master Gardeners and the ERT Green Team
- A covered bench, pollinator garden, and fruiting vines have been installed at the **ERT Pocket Park**
- Installation of the **Born Learning Trail** at Plum Point Park, the first in Norfolk and a community partnership with the United Way of South Hampton Roads
- **Upgraded 4 trail counters** to 5G data

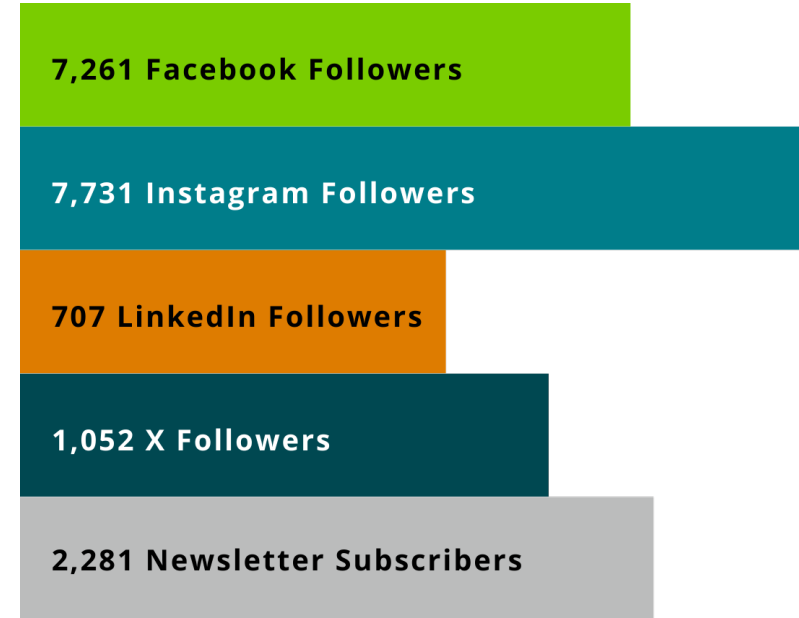


Progress On Annual Evaluation Metrics

PROGRESS ON ADDITIONAL FUTURE METRICS:

- Design and implement a digital media/mobile media platform for community engagement to promote use of the trail

ERT Foundation has implemented a multi-platform digital marketing plan that includes our website, Mailchimp newsletter, and five social media channels. Please find annual engagement metrics below:



PROGRESS ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF TRAILHEADS:

- The ERT's **first Hydration Station** was installed at Jeff Robertson Park
- **Larchmont Library Trailhead** has been awarded a Virginia Outdoors Foundation grant of \$404,000 completely funding the upgrades and addition of a kayak launch. Thank you to the City Council for approving the funds and the Deed of Dedication for this space. This trailhead is due to break ground at the end of 2024.
- In partnership with VisitNorfolk the Virginia Tourism Corporation has awarded **\$20,000** to activate our blue trail with kayak rental kiosks, the purchase of kayaks and PPE and a kayak storage rack.
- In partnership with Tidewater Tech **4 more trailhead shelters** are being constructed and on track to be installed in the fall/winter of 2024.



ASSESS ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TRAIL:

- We are delighted to present our first **Economic Impact Study** completed in April 2024.
 - The ERT Foundation retained highly regarded Magnum Economics, based in Richmond, to quantify the economic and fiscal contribution that ERT makes to Norfolk.
 - Importantly Magnum Economics uses the IMPLAN economic simulation model that precisely reflects economic realities of specific industry or study area.
 - The 10.5- mile Elizabeth River Trail delivers **\$18.7 million** in annual economic output to City of Norfolk, **158 jobs** and **\$5.8 million** in associated wages/benefits.
 - ERT produces **\$677,200** in annual taxes for Norfolk and **\$2.2 million** in local, state and federal tax revenues.
 - Norfolk contributes \$150,000 annually to ERT and reaps a robust **4:1 return** on that investment. By comparison, the City of Virginia Beach barely broke even on their contribution to "Something in Water Festival" in 2023.
 - Also included in the study is a listing of potential funding mechanisms and sources for further expansion and leveraging of ERT assets.
- The ERT Master Planning Committee has completed a **Trail Standards and Design Manual** that will be submitted to the City with all future trail related projects
- ERT Foundation Executive Director and Executive Committee submitted a revised version of the **MOU to the City** in the fall of 2023
- The **Economic Development Department and Visit Norfolk** regularly use the Elizabeth River Trail in their marketing of Norfolk to potential developers and the partnership with the **Norfolk Innovation Corridor and Greater Norfolk**

Corporation has strengthened in the last year.

- We would strive to be in a position where Economic Development and City Planning departments refer all new ERT-adjacent projects to the ERT Foundation Master Planning committee for review. This provides us the opportunity to work with developers and incorporate the ERT into their project site plans.
- The Elizabeth River Trail is included in the **Intergovernmental Agreement with the Pamunkey Tribe** for land in the Harbor Park section of the trail. Our inclusion demonstrates the current and future commitment to the ERT from the City's Economic Development Department. We have worked closely with the Norfolk Casino Development team to accommodate the trail at every stage of the development.
- The **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** has worked alongside the ERT Master Planning committee to consider how to incorporate the trail and the connection and views of the water in their line of protection plans.
- The ERT is being included in Old Dominion University's campus Master Plan
- The ERT is being included in the Naval Support Activity base Master Plan
- The ERT is the **placemaking component** that links to Norfolk Innovation Corridor. Since 2022 the ERT and NIC co-located to share office space and increase collaboration. The ERT and the NIC partnered with ULI Virginia to host a walking tour highlighting NIC businesses and the economic impact of the trail in our region.

FY2023 - 2024 saw a host of **new businesses and construction** along the trail:

- Water's Edge Winery
- Railyard has announced a number of initial tenants
- New residential at the corner of Hampton Blvd & Redgate on

Progress On Annual Evaluation Metrics

the Ghent Loop

- Lambert’s Point Public open Space
- Fairwinds Landing in Chelsea
- Pawsnickety Pets
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers seawall planning and construction add paths/trails in downtown Norfolk

New construction and businesses in 2024 include:

- FR8 House Coffee
- Biscuit Belly
- Nothing Bundt Cakes
- Club Pilates
- Chicken Salad Chicks
- Bogey’s Putt-Putt
- Stretch Lab
- 508 Crafthouse

ENGAGE AN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM WITH NSU/ODU AND TCC

This summer we hosted **three exemplary interns** assisting us with various projects both on and off the trail; Mackenzie Rickard ODU Civil Engineering Technology Major, A’lauren Gilchrist NSU Journalism Major, Kate Callaway UVA graduate and rising graduate student at NYU studying Scientific Journalism



ALIGN ERT MARKETING WITH CITY AND OTHER ENTITIES:

Completed marketing and/or event collaborations with following community stakeholders:

- Alpha Kappa Alpha
- Chrysler Museum of Art
- Barry Art Museum
- City of Norfolk: Marketing, Economic Development, and Parks and Recreation
- Benchtop Brewing Company
- Dogtown
- Bike Norfolk
- Downtown Norfolk Council
- Chelsea Business Association
- EVMS

- FestEvents
- Freshtopia
- Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization
- Hermitage Museum & Gardens
- Keep Norfolk Beautiful
- Lime - ERT designated as Lime Hero
- Norfolk Cycle Sisters
- Norfolk Innovation Corridor
- Norfolk Tour Company
- Norfolk State University
- Old Dominion University
- Port of Virginia
- Smartmouth Brewing Company
- Spinclusion
- Social Cycling Norfolk
- Tidewater Striders
- Urban Land Institute of Virginia
- Virginia Zoo
- Virginia Beach Active Transportation Advisory Committee
- Visit Norfolk
- West Ghent Civic League

ERT Foundation Marketing and Events Committees will continue and grow these partnerships in 2024.

In 2023 we fostered relationships with the following additional community partners and will continue to grow these partnerships in fiscal year 2024-25.

- Portsmouth Partnership
- BlackBRAND
- Tidewater Trails Alliance/Trail757
- Norfolk Botanical Gardens
- St. James Church
- Shiloh Baptist Church
- Chesterfield Heights Civic League
- The Pollinator Educator
- United Way of South Hampton Roads
- Urban Renewal Center



Visit Norfolk provides the “Along the ERT” pass where trail users can receive discounts and prizes by checking in along the ERT!



DID YOU KNOW...

The ERT averages **650,000** trail user counts per year!



Programs & Volunteers

The ERT proudly offers over 100 opportunities each year. From group rides, botanical tours, and community events, to historical tours, litter cleanups, and trail beautifications.

The ERT partnered with LISC Hampton Roads who held a social event to benefit the ERT at the Water Street Open Space. In an effort to bring the trail to communities, DEI Co-Vice Chair Airl Barrientos led a planting class at Calvary Towers. Executive Director Kindra Greene took the trail to Corporate Landing Elementary School to introduce students to STEAM on the ERT. The 2nd Annual Glow Party brought nearly 200 people to Jeff Robertson Park for a free community event.

Through the support of volunteers and donors, the ERT provides a variety of fun and free community events along with educational programs. These events and programs serve to bring awareness to the trail as well as bringing Norfolk residents together!

FY 23-24 EVENTS, PROGRAMS, & VOLUNTEER TOTALS

- 114 Events
- 3,268 Event Attendees
- 949 Volunteers
- 2,720 Volunteer Hours
- \$175,940 Value of Volunteer Time
- 3,163 Pounds of Trash Collected
- 9 Trees Planted
- 341 Plants Planted
- 5 Green Spaces Maintained



Michael Milner



Michael Milner





Corporate Sponsors

LEGACY BUILDER - \$25,000

Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters

BRIDGEBUILDER - \$10,000

Downtown Norfolk Council

PRA Group

RIVERRIDER - \$5,000

The Breeden Company

Festevents

Glasser and Glasser

S.L. Nusbaum

RAILRUNNER - \$2,500

Clearstead Advisors, LLC.

Festevents

Kaufman & Canoles

NexGen Title Agency

WPA

SUPPORTER - \$7,500

KPMG

PUPPY PARADE SPONSOR

Norfolk Casino - \$5,000

GLOW PARTY SPONSORS

Afterglow Brewing Company - In-Kind

Trailblazer Donors

Since it's launch in November of 2022, over **200 Trailblazers** have raised over **\$49,500** to support the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation.

Christine Neikirk - \$5,000

Christopher Uiterwyk - \$4,100

Sylvia Boecker - \$2,000

Ann P. Stokes - \$2,000

Bruce T. Bishop - \$1,030

Patricia Chase - \$1,030

Denise Diederich - \$1,030

Susan Einhorn - \$1,000

Tim Faulkner - \$1,000

Jimmie Koch - \$1,000

Richard Mapp - \$1,000

Kevin Murphy - \$1,000

Terry Whibley - \$1,000

Sustaining Donors

Sustaining donors make a recurring donation each month to support the ERT. Sustaining Donors can select the Celebrate Every Mile giving campaign to create automatic monthly, quarterly, or yearly donations.

Barry Bishop

Sam Broughton

Anne Christie

Steven Cotnoir

Michael Doviak

Walter Frenska

John Garrett

Jackie Glass

Michael Hooper

Lauren Krager

Cindy Mackey

Lynette Mason

Rachel McCall

Anne McCollough

Connie Minton

Mack Nolen

Ellen Papetti

Zachary Popp

Barbara Price

Tara Ramsey

Patti Shawn

Patricia K. Smith

Jackie Stein



ELIZABETHRIVERTRAIL.ORG
HELLO@ELIZABETHRIVERTRAIL.ORG

(757) 681-1405
P.O. BOX 3042, NORFOLK, VA 23514-3042