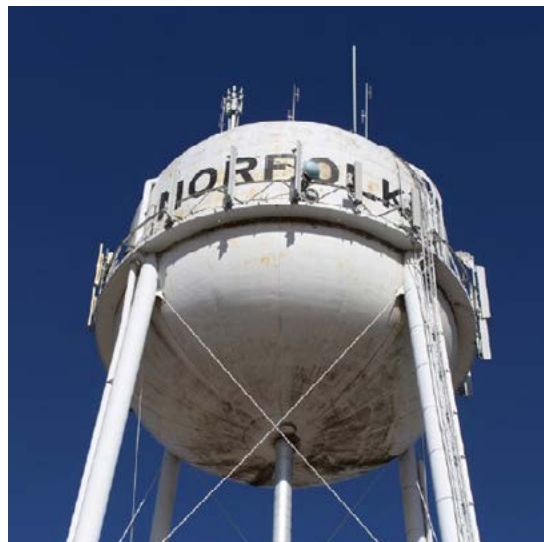




2023 Annual Report



2023 Annual Report

About Norfolk

The Mission of the City of Norfolk is to “provide quality public services in an effective and efficient manner to enhance the common good and quality of life including citizen involvement.”

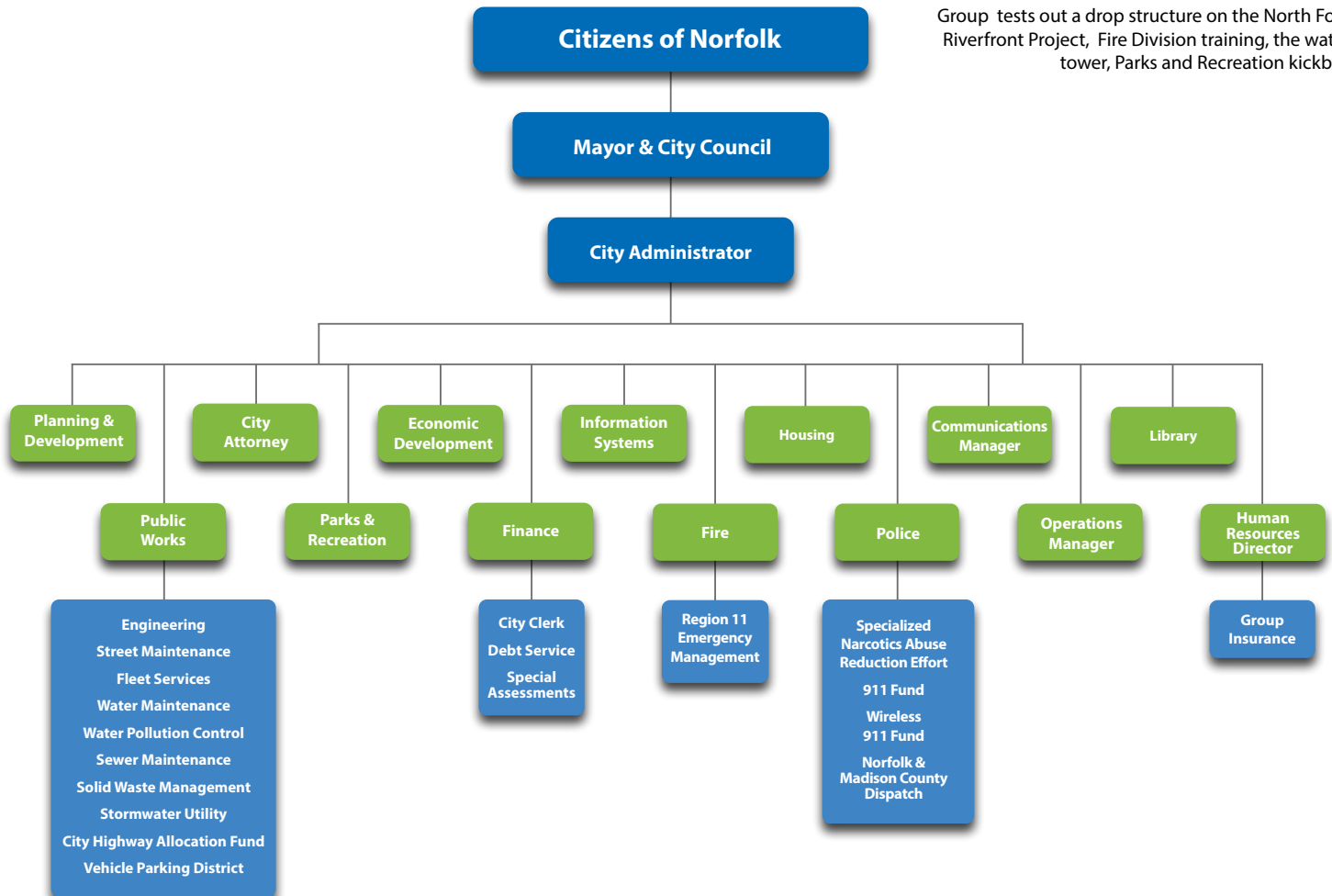
In 1881, the Village of Norfolk was organized. The settlers proclaimed “North Fork” to be their permanent post office address, named after the river, but suggested “Norfolk” as the simplest compounding of “North Fork.” Postal authorities, thinking the word had been misspelled, changed the spelling to “Norfolk.”

This is why you may hear some Norfolks pronounce it Nor-fork. Whichever way you decide to say it, know that we are glad to have you here.

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Cover: A student with UNL Outdoor Adventures Group tests out a drop structure on the North Fork Riverfront Project, Fire Division training, the water tower, Parks and Recreation kickball





right at home.

309 N 5th Street
Norfolk, NE 68701
P402-844-2010 F402-844-2001
www.norfolkne.gov

Josh Moenning
Mayor

jmoenning@norfolkne.gov

Dear Norfolkans,

At the beginning of each new year, the City of Norfolk delivers to each of its taxpaying households, Norfolk's shareholders, a report illustrating how tax dollars are collected and put to use in form of services. We hope the 2023 Annual Report is of interest to you.

In a nutshell, 2023 was a year of significant growth, illustrated by major infrastructure investments, new business development, housing construction, and quality of life enhancements. Not having the benefit of lying along an interstate system or proximity to a larger metro area, Norfolk has to work twice as hard to attract new opportunities. As in recent years, we worked hard in 2023 to shout to the world that Norfolk is open for business.

Being open to new business, new ideas, and new ways of doing things is paying off. Despite an uncertain national economy, our industries invested in major expansions, large new construction projects began in the agribusiness sector, renovations began to make way for national brands in retail and hospitality, entrepreneurs started new enterprises, and our downtown revitalization efforts continued to draw attention and accolades from across the state.

All the while, city services were bolstered, reformed, and strengthened to support a growing community. Division by division and department by department, the following report highlights just some of the work our skilled city staff accomplished in 2023 to help make Norfolk an even better place to live, work, and play.

Thank you for being an engaged and neighborly citizen. Our community is only as strong as the bonds that form between friends and neighbors. Have a happy and healthy 2024.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Moenning".

Mayor Josh Moenning
City of Norfolk





MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

The City of Norfolk has a Mayor/Council form of government. The Mayor and eight council members are elected on a non-partisan ballot. The Norfolk City Council meets at 5:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month in the City Council Chambers at 309 N. 5th Street, Norfolk, Nebraska.

The council holds a public comment session the last meeting of each quarter for all community members.

2024 ELECTION DATES

- 1/5 Candidates can begin filing
- 2/15 Deadline for incumbents to file for office
- 3/1 Deadline for non-incumbents to file for office
- 5/14 Primary Election held
- 11/5 Election Day

GARY JACKSON STEPS DOWN AFTER SEVEN YEARS OF SERVICE




Gary Jackson
Ward 3


In 2023, Ward 3 Councilman Gary Jackson resigned for health reasons. Jackson was first elected and began serving on the council in 2016 and was reelected in 2020.

Justin Snorton was appointed during a special meeting. Snorton is a longtime Norfolk resident and works as a senior manager at Tyson Foods Inc. He also has been active in community sports and civic programs.

Ward 2




Frank Arens
farens@norfolkne.gov
Term expires 12/2024



Shane Clausen
sclausen@norfolkne.gov
Term expires 12/2026

Mayor




Josh Moenning
jmoenning@norfolkne.gov
Term expires 12/2024

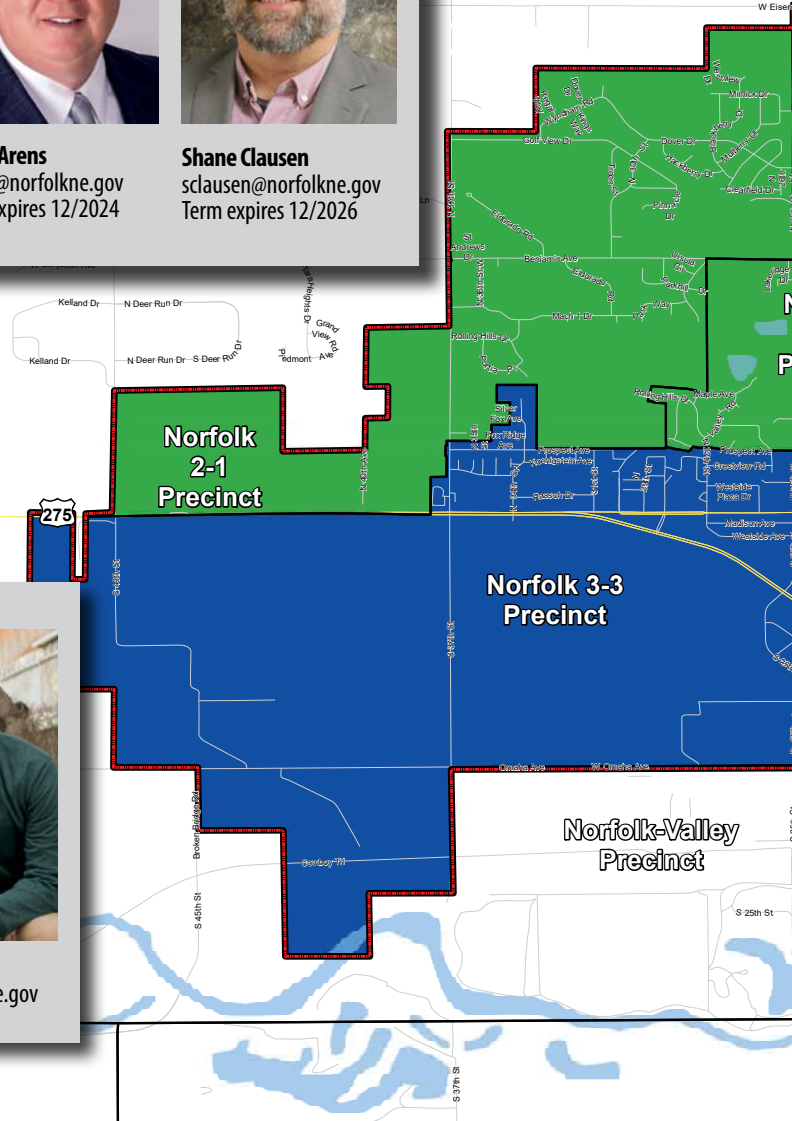
Ward 3



Justin Webb
jwebb@norfolkne.gov
Term expires 12/2026

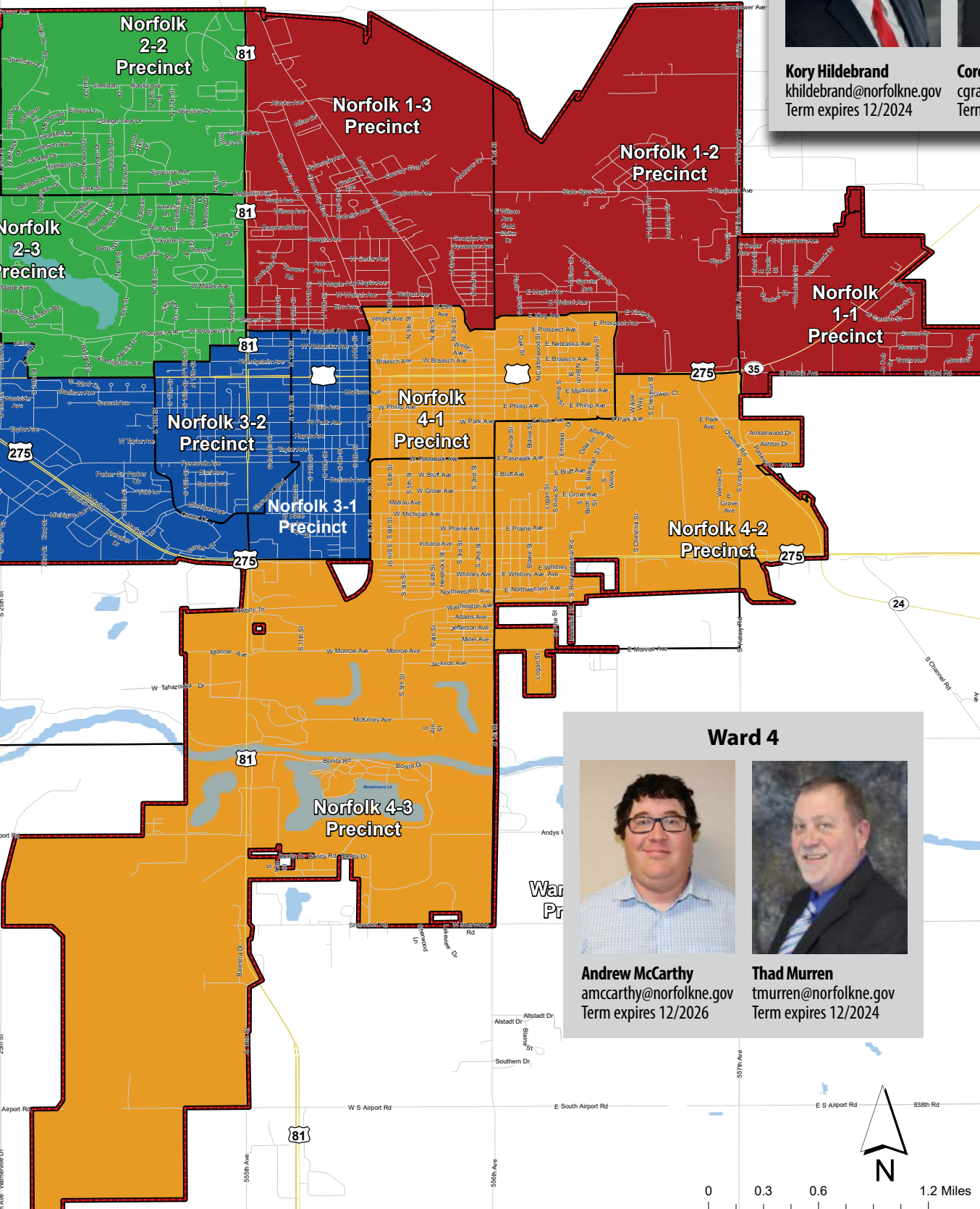


Justin Snorton
jsnorton@norfolkne.gov
Term expires 12/2024



BC-Battle Creek Precinct

2023 Norfolk City Council Representatives



Ward 1



Kory Hildebrand
khildebrand@norfolkne.gov
Term expires 12/2024



Corey Granquist
cgranquist@norfolkne.gov
Term expires 12/2026

Ward 4



Andrew McCarthy
amccarthy@norfolkne.gov
Term expires 12/2026



Thad Murren
tmurren@norfolkne.gov
Term expires 12/2024



Community Engagement

CITIZENS 101

They've seen the City's water filtration tanks, wandered through the back offices of the City's IT department, and got an inside look at an ambulance. Norfolk 101: Citizens Academy takes place in the fall and allows residents to delve into the inner workings of the city government, gaining a behind-the-scenes look at the various City divisions that contribute to the community's well-being.

Norfolk 101: Citizens Academy is more than just a program; it is a bridge that connects the government with its citizens, fostering transparency and understanding. The program's primary objective is to educate

residents about the city's operations and functions while also empowering them to become more active, informed, and engaged community members.

Whether a person has lived in Norfolk all their life or recently moved here, Norfolk 101: Citizens Academy gives them a unique chance to see how city government works.

The heart of this unique program lies in its ability to offer participants an opportunity to meet the individuals who make the City run. Throughout the academy, residents are introduced to the diverse departments that keep Norfolk

operating smoothly. These departments include Economic Development, Housing Agency, Public Safety, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and many more.

"This program offers an educational behind-the-scenes look at the operations of several city departments. It's a great opportunity to learn more about your community, how it works, and how you can engage to help make it better," said Norfolk Mayor Josh Moenning.

Participants were recognized at a Norfolk City Council meeting during a special graduation ceremony.



STAFF ATTENDS LEADERSHIP NORFOLK

Two staff members with the City of Norfolk, Kylee Soderberg and Mikah Wheeler, began Leadership Norfolk offered by the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce. Leadership Norfolk is a 9-month class that submerges

participants in the Norfolk business climate and develops world-class leadership skills. Beginning in October, sessions are held once a month. These sessions are filled with renowned speakers and private tours of the largest companies in Northeast Nebraska.

PEOPLE POWER AWARDS

In 2023, the Norfolk City Council began recognizing residents with the 'People Power' award. 'People Power' awards are distributed to those Norfolks "who, of their own accord and motivated by goodwill, love, and care for their neighbors, commit acts of extraordinary thoughtfulness, generosity, and compassion, demonstrating the power of people helping people and neighbors helping neighbors throughout our community."



Max Blunck

Max Blunck was the first recipient and recognized for orchestrating an Easter Egg Hunt in Norfolk's Central Park because, in Max's own words, 'Some people didn't have Easter egg hunts, so I just did it for them.'



Ruby Thone

Ruby Thone was recognized after she created 'Ruby's Rainbow of Hope,' which involves making care bags packed with a cozy blanket, an activity book, and other essential items, as well as a special note of encouragement, donated to those who are battling cancer.



Lucy Yost

Lucy Yost was honored for her efforts in replacing and repairing missing or damaged markers at the gravesites of veterans in Prospect Hill.

SALVATION ARMY BREAKS GROUND ON NEW FACILITY

The Salvation Army of Norfolk marked a day of celebration with a groundbreaking ceremony for its new facility at 401 North 4th Street. The new facility, a result of years of planning, will enable the Salvation Army to expand services, including an enhanced summer camp, increased food storage, and diversified programs for seniors, single mothers, and struggling families. Amidst the excitement about the future location, Salvation Army director Major Jesus Trejo acknowledged the ongoing reliance on community support through donations and volunteers. State Senator Robert Dover emphasized the lengthy journey to secure funding, culminating in a groundbreaking that reflects the intent of the legislature to

support community projects. The ceremony featured reflections from Jan Einspahr, daughter of major contributors Paul and Eleanor McIntosh, who shared a poignant quote advocating a life dedicated to helping others. The event concluded with a tour of the building and a preview of architectural plans for the new location. Construction began in August.

SOUTH NORFOLK REVITALIZATION DISCUSSIONS BEGIN

City of Norfolk staff and elected officials began meeting with a number of citizens in south Norfolk in an effort to revitalize the area. Concerns regarding infrastructure, trails, and planning and zoning were discussed. Learn more at <https://norfolkne.gov/government/departments/engineering/projects/>.



Salvation Army representatives, Senator Robert Dover, and city officials break ground on the new Salvation Army facility

Public Works



Construction of the new 1st Street Bridge

1ST STREET WORK ON BRIDGE REMOVAL AND ROUNDABOUT

Work was completed this year on 1st Street from Norfolk Avenue north to Prospect Avenue. The project included the re-construction of 1st Street to allow for the installation of a new roundabout, sidewalks, crosswalks, and storm drain system. The recently finished roundabout at the intersection of 1st Street and Braasch Avenue allows for better traffic flow and increased safety for vehicles and pedestrians. Not only does it enhance efficiency, it includes new landscaping and decorative street lighting that transforms the intersection into a visually appealing and welcoming space for residents and visitors alike. The project also included the

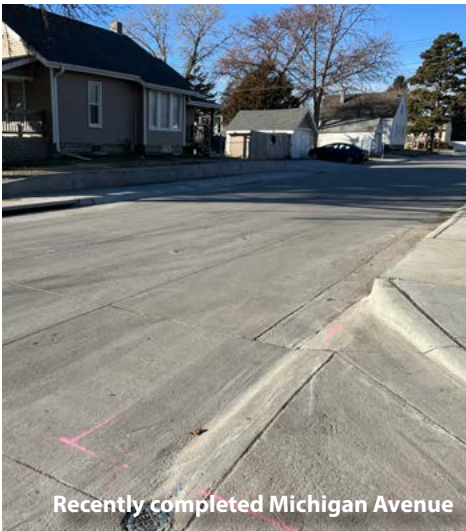
removal of the old North Fork River bridge that was originally constructed in 1935 and reconstructed in 1983, along with the removal of the concrete weir structure that was part of the river at the bridge. The old bridge was replaced with a new 60-foot long single span bridge to allow room for the river to flow freely and for a sidewalk and bike path to be constructed under the bridge. The new bridge is also wider than the old bridge to provide room for sidewalks on each side of the bridge behind a concrete barrier rail for added pedestrian safety.

The trail that previously crossed 1st Street on the north side of the bridge is being re-routed under the bridge and will tie into the existing trails along the river to the east and the west. The continuation of the trails around

the river will be completed in the spring with the rest of the River project.

COMMUNITY STREET IMPROVEMENTS SURVEY

In 2023, the City of Norfolk specified an additional \$2,500,000 in street repairs for Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 totaling \$5,000,000 in additional street repair funding. To aid the City in prioritizing street repairs, the community participated in a street repair needs survey. One hundred-forty respondents completed the survey and the engineering staff is organizing the first set of bids for the top 18 projects. Concrete repair work will take place in 2024 and mill and asphalt overlay work is slated for 2025.



Recently completed Michigan Avenue

MICHIGAN AVENUE RECONSTRUCTION

The West Michigan Avenue & 8th Street- Street and Utility Project wrapped up this last year, one year ahead of schedule. The project is located along Michigan Avenue from 10th to 7th Street, 8th Street from Michigan to Omaha Avenue, and Michigan Avenue from 13th Street to Wood Street. The reconstruction project was designed to mitigate ongoing drainage issues in the area and included the installation of storm drain, new water and sanitary sewer mains, sidewalks and full depth pavement reconstruction.

SEWER RELINING PROJECT COMPLETED

Sewer lining work was conducted along Omaha Avenue. The sewer pipe was rehabbed with a cured-in-place-pipe (CIPP) method. CIPP is used to repair damaged or deteriorated sewer pipes without digging up the existing pipe or disrupting roads, driveways, sidewalks, or landscaping. The process involves installing a resin-saturated felt tube into an existing sewer pipe. Once in place, the tube is inflated to fit tightly



Newly overlaid Madison Avenue

ASPHALT OVERLAY WORK COMPLETED

The City of Norfolk Asphalt Overlay Project was completed this past year. The project was comprised of milling up to two inches of the existing road surface and placing a 2" thick asphalt overlay, as well as performing concrete repairs, along several sections of City streets. The project was awarded to Knife River Midwest, LLC. The new layer of asphalt is a maintenance measure used to help extend the life of the existing roadway.

inside the original pipe and cured or hardened to create a new plastic pipe within the old pipe. During the process, a steam cloud coming from a six-foot vent stack at a manhole was visible in the air and dissipated quickly once the process was complete.

This work is expected to extend the life of the storm sewer pipe by 50-75 years.

Work was completed on:

- East Monroe Avenue from 1st to 4th Street
- Six downtown Vehicle Parking District lots
- Madison Avenue from 1st to 7th Street
- Norfolk Avenue from 7th to 9th Street
- Sections of 5th Street from Madison to Braasch Avenue
- Blaine Street from East Phillip to East Madison Avenue
- Portion of East Benjamin Avenue



Sewer relining process

Public Works



Benjamin Avenue Reconstruction

BENJAMIN AVENUE CONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction and widening of Benjamin Avenue from 13th Street east to 1st Street continued this year. Phase 2 of the project kicked off in March to reconstruct the west half of the project from 13th Street to Riverside Boulevard.

The project consists of widening the street from four lanes to five lanes to include a center turn lane. Other improvements involved in the project are reconstruction of the storm drain system, new sidewalks, bike trails, street lighting, new signals at the Riverside intersection, and enhanced landscaping.

All main-lane paving, along with the reconstruction of driveways and intersections on Benjamin Avenue, is complete as the project nears the finish line. Outstanding work to be completed in the spring will include the remaining street lighting on the south side of Benjamin, planting trees and landscape beds, installing sod, and completing the new crosswalk at

13th Street.

The landscape contractor finished installing all the irrigation, planted trees, landscape beds, and placed sod on the east end of the project. All the lighting was installed on the east half as well. The box culvert extension east of Riverside Boulevard was completed in October.

WATER TOWER REMOVED

The elevated water tank located off 25th Street and West Prospect Avenue was demolished this past year. In 1964, the elevated water tower was built to serve the higher elevation for citizens living in northwest Norfolk, while the underground tank continued to supply water to citizens in the lower elevations. As northwest Norfolk grew, in 1996 the city constructed a one-million-gallon underground tank at 49th Street and Eisenhower Avenue to serve the area in northwest Norfolk. As the elevated tank was no longer in use, discussions on its removal began. If the tower had remained, the City would have been required to repaint it at a cost of \$300,000.



Removal of the water tower at 25th Street & West Prospect Avenue

Members of the Norfolk Fire Division take part in a training exercise in the vacant Kensington building



Norfolk was recognized as one of Nebraska's safest cities by Safewise



Public Safety

FIRE & POLICE TRAIN AT THE KENSINGTON BEFORE SALE

While the Kensington sat vacant prior to Ho-Chunk Capital closing on its purchase agreement, the Norfolk Fire and Police Divisions were able to use the building to undergo critical training.

Norfolk Fire conducted high-rise operations, which involved hooking a hose to the outside of the building, ascending to a designated floor, and connecting hoses internally to extinguish fires on upper floors. They also practiced multi-room search and rescue techniques in all the apartments, along with firefighter rescue training.

The Police Division engaged in various training exercises, including active threat response for both patrol officers and new recruits. The tactical team participated in room clearing scenarios, interior drone operation, honor guard training, and use-of-force and de-escalation training/scenarios.

"With multi-story buildings being built and restored here in Norfolk, this provides training opportunities that challenge our firefighters' skills when working in mid-rise (5-12 floors) buildings," said Assistant Chief Trever O'Brien. "Fire Division officers and firefighters apply critical thinking and firefighting skills differently in buildings of this size to mitigate problems and keep people safe. Conducting training

in buildings like this simply cannot be duplicated in an occupied space without disturbing residents, so the timing is right."

Ho-Chunk Capital intends to transform this historic building into a boutique hotel, poised to become a focal point for tourists in downtown Norfolk.



Norfolk Police participates in active threat response training



Norfolk Firefighters train with the new hazmat shelter

Public Safety

NEW FIRE HAZMAT SHELTER ESTABLISHED

Norfolk Fire expanded its repertoire in 2023 by incorporating a new hazmat shelter. The Zumro tent is specifically designed for Hazmat Decontamination, constituting its primary purpose. Additionally, the fire department will utilize the tent as a temporary shelter in extreme temperatures, such as during a high-rise fire when conditions are unsuitable for individuals to wait outside for transportation to a more permanent location.

Personnel undergo annual training in Hazmat Decontamination, and the new equipment will play a crucial

role in the ongoing decontamination training sessions. The department is considering showcasing this addition during the upcoming fire safety day in October.

Trever O'Brien, Assistant Fire Chief, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to enhance their hazmat inventory. He emphasized the significance of the new equipment in improving decontamination capabilities, particularly in more remote locations where some of their existing tools may be less effective. This addition is expected to contribute to enhanced operational efficiency and safety for the Norfolk Fire Division.



Dr. Leah Barrett with Dr. Tom Surber

DR. SURBER RECEIVES HONOR FROM NECC

In August, a new conference room at Northeast Community College's Lifelong Learning Center was named the G. Tom "Doc" Surber, MD Conference Room. Surber was instrumental in establishing the Emergency Medicine program at Northeast Community College and in coordination with Norfolk Fire, was also responsible for the development of the Paramedic program.

2023 OPTIMIST AWARDS PRESENTED

The Norfolk Morning and Noon Optimist clubs celebrated Norfolk's Public Safety Divisions. Firefighter/Paramedic Chris Kneifl of the Norfolk Fire Division and Officer Brent Tietz with Norfolk Police were recognized for their service. Kneifl has been with Norfolk Fire since 2018 and Tietz started with Norfolk Police in 2009. Optimist International honors those who inspire respect for the law.



Firefighter/Paramedic Chris Kneifl recognized by the Noon Optimist Club



Officer Brent Tietz recognized at National Night Out



9/11 MEMORIAL STAIR CLIMB

Norfolk firefighters and residents participated in a 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb at the Norfolk Public Safety Training facility. Many citizens and first responders take part in memorial stair climbs across the nation annually on September 11.

“We’re not just doing 110 flights of stairs to remember the 343 firefighters who lost their lives on that day, but also to honor the many individuals who have suffered for countless years after 9/11 due to the toxic environments they had to endure while searching for buried bodies in the rubble,” said Ryan Goodman, a Norfolk firefighter.

The Norfolk Fire Reserves began the stair climb at the training tower a few years ago, and this year, Firefighter Union Local 1005 wanted to support the reserves by providing a meal and recovery aids for the memorial climb. Additionally, they organized fun activities such as coloring and games.



FIREFIGHTER AND POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARDED

Norfolk Fire’s Bob Nelson and Norfolk Police’s Brent Lowe were recognized as Firefighter and Police Officer of the year, respectively, at the American Legion’s Law Enforcement and Firefighters Banquet back in November. Nelson recently retired after 35 years with the Norfolk Fire Division. Lowe served more than four years in the U.S. Marines and three years with the New Orleans Police Department before joining the Norfolk Police Division in 2021.

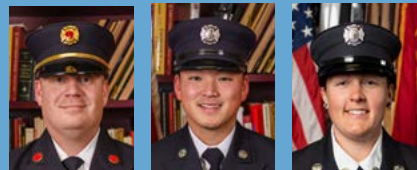


POLICE & FIRE CHIEF AWARDED DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS AWARD

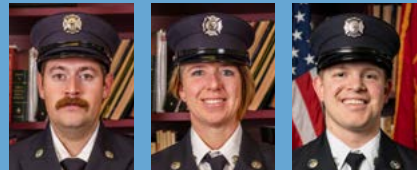
Police Chief Don Miller and Fire Tim Wragge were honored by Northeast Community College’s Alumni Hall of Success. This accolade is awarded to former students who have achieved significant success in their profession, exhibited exemplary citizenship qualities, or made

2023 Fire, Police, and Dispatch Staff Promotions and Hiring

FIRE DIVISION



Sam Funk Promoted to Lieutenant
Adam Smith Firefighter
Ashley Dittbemer Firefighter



Austin Kroeger Firefighter
Cati Witzel Firefighter
C.J. Neumann Firefighter



Micah Baumgartel Firefighter

DISPATCH



Josie Poulsen Dispatcher

POLICE DIVISION



Jeremy Polacek Promoted to Lieutenant
Scott Hansen Promoted to Sergeant
Joel Vonderohe Police Officer



Derek Bosler Police Officer
Gannon Tighe Police Officer

significant contributions to their community. Miller was hired by the Norfolk Police Division in 1990 and Wragge began his career with the Norfolk Fire Division in 2002.

Debt & Investments

CITY OF NORFOLK HISTORICAL BONDED INDEBTEDNESS

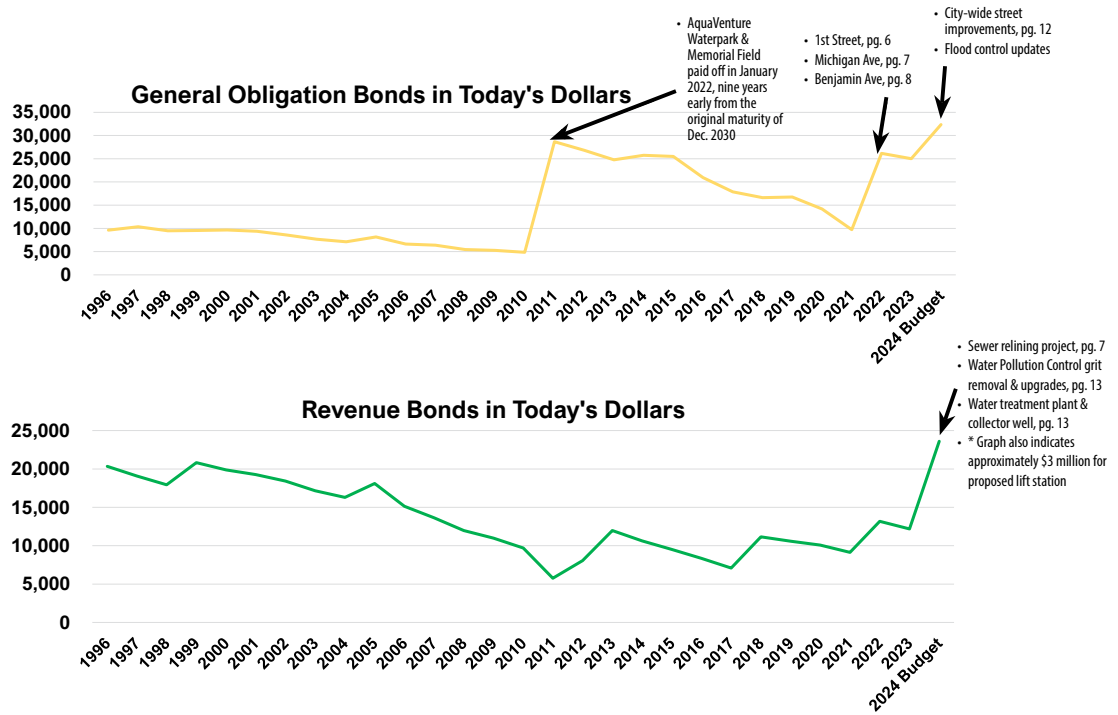
(Charts in today's dollars in thousands)

General Obligation Bonds

General obligation, or GO, bonds are backed by the general revenue of the issuing municipality.

Revenue Bonds

Revenue bonds are supported by a specific revenue source including water, sewer, and solid waste user fees.



CITY BUDGET DEBT ISSUANCE

The FY 2023-24 total City-wide budget increases 12.67% or \$14.9 million, primarily due to debt issuance for street improvements, water treatment plant upgrades and a collector well, and the water pollution control grit removal and plant upgrades. **This debt increase did not necessitate a property tax increase.**

The next few pages provide citizens with an in-depth look at the projects this debt will fund and provide insight on the projects the City will take on in order to maintain a competitive, desirable community for citizens, visitors, and the business community.

GENERAL FUND BALANCE

The 2023-24 budget makes progress toward restoring the general fund balance to 16% of operating expenditures. Fund balance is the City's cash and investments that provide working capital and savings that it can use in case of emergencies and other unforeseen events. Fund balance is budgeted to increase by \$684,635 bringing it to 13.9% of operating expenditures at the end of FY 2024.

In the past 13 years, the City Council has increased the City's general fund balance from \$3,486,558 to \$9,706,524. In 2022, \$975,000 of the general fund balance was used to pay off the bonds issued to purchase the City Hall building, earlier than anticipated.

STREET IMPROVEMENTS

The budget includes a \$5 million bond issue for street projects utilizing existing revenue sources with no tax increase proposed. The project includes 25,000 square yards of street repairs and reconstruction as well as much needed repairs at more than 80 intersections.

To fund the \$450,000 annual debt service on the bond issue, there is an annual transfer of \$200,000 of Council Priority dollars to City Highway Allocation Funds (CHAF), and the transfer from CHAF to the General Fund is reduced \$250,000.

To learn more about the City of Norfolk's finances visit, <https://norfolkne.gov/government/departments/finance/>



The current Water Pollution Control (WPC) grit removal system is 50 years old and has limited capacity.

WATER POLLUTION CONTROL GRIT REMOVAL AND PLANT UPGRADES

In 2023, the City was awarded \$1.5 million in grant funding from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. The funding is going towards the replacement of the old grit removal system and building, along with upgrading the lift pumping system and upgrading the overland receiving station at the Norfolk Water Pollution Control Plant (WPC). This project will allow for better treatment and a higher flow of wastewater through the plant.

The current WPC grit removal system is 50 years old and limits the treatment capacity of the plant to approximately 5.5 million gallons per day. This necessary and critical upgrading will replace the current grit removal system with a modern headwork system that will double the FIRM capacity

of the wastewater plant. This capacity increase will allow for the continued economic growth of Norfolk and will directly serve residential, commercial, and industrial growth. As Norfolk hopes to grow, city services must be maintained and upgraded periodically to meet demand. This project would be the first step for the City to increase its capacity and serve residential, commercial, and industrial areas in Norfolk.

The improved infrastructure project for the upgraded water pollution control plant can help ensure that local residents have access to clean and safe water, protect the environment, and support the overall health and well-being of the community.

Plans for the multi-million-dollar project are expected to be discussed at a City Council meeting in February.



WATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADES AND COLLECTOR WELL

Upgrades to the West Water Treatment Plant and the construction of a new collector well will commence in 2024. The improvements to the treatment plant are crucial, given that the current storage reservoir was constructed in 1974, when the population of Norfolk was just over 16,000.

When the original storage reservoir was built, it was anticipated that another tank would be needed in the future, and the time has come to make the necessary improvements to accommodate increased water usage capacity.

The new collector well will increase groundwater production 1.5 million gallons per day and will increase the west wellfield capacity to 14.5 million gallons per day. City staff will initiate the bidding process in February.



Parks & Recreation

COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER TO BUILD PLAYGROUND AT LIBERTY BELL PARK

In August, a new playground, designed with input from 550 local children, was constructed in a single-day build at Liberty Bell Park. The City of Norfolk collaborated with KABOOM!, along with Integrity partners Premier Marketing and WealthFirm.

The playground build stands as one of the largest charitable endeavors led by Integrity's recently established Integrity Foundation. Before the historic build day, the playground structure itself was designed using input collected from more than 550 local children who submitted drawings of their dream playground. These designs underwent review by more than 200 community members who integrated them into the final artistic and functional decisions. The Integrity Foundation worked side-by-side throughout the entire process. The playground and picnic areas will serve as

a gathering place for families, fostering an increased sense of belonging and civic pride for community members of all ages.

"We deeply appreciate all the Integrity employees who generously volunteered their time and energy to make this Build Day possible," said Josh Moening, Mayor of Norfolk. "The Integrity Foundation recognized a significant need in our community, and in true Integrity fashion, the team rallied together to exceed our expectations in fulfilling it. This revitalized space in the heart of Norfolk will once again become a place of connection for our community, and it wouldn't have been

possible without the unwavering commitment and support of the Integrity Foundation and those who lead it."

The park itself was dedicated in September 1976 to commemorate America's bicentennial year. The new playspace joins a historical bell to represent the Liberty Bell and a memorial with the names of 42 of the earliest settlers to Norfolk who traveled from Ixonia, Wisconsin, in 1866. The new playscape is the first significant step in other improvements to the park, including new restroom facilities and upgrades to the park's other attractions.



Volunteers work to put together a new playground at Liberty Bell Park



Summer recreation camps brought new activities in 2023

NEW RECREATION PROGRAMS CREATED FOR COMMUNITY

The Parks and Recreation Division began offering new recreational opportunities to the community in 2023. A wide variety of programs have been offered this past year, ranging from gardening and litter cleanup to movie nights in the park and seasonal camps.

The programs, available for both youth and adults, change seasonally and are promoted online and through a new quarterly catalog. Citizens can sign up for all activities and services on the Parks and Rec Active page. **In 2023, there were 62 recreational programs with 1024 participants. Camps will be a significant emphasis in 2024.**

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD CREATED

The City Council approved the establishment of a Parks and Recreation Board. The nine-member board offers recommendations to address the community's needs. Board members also have the opportunity to serve as a voice for the community and advocate for concerns driven by the community.

PARKS MASTER PLANNING CONTINUES WITH SURVEY

Parks and Recreation is collaborating with PROS Consulting on a Parks Master Plan. A citizen survey has been distributed, and staff will hold public open house sessions in early 2024 to discuss the results.

TA-HA ZOUKA BRIDGE UPDATED

Staff repaired the bridge in Ta-Ha-Zouka Park this past year. The original bridge was put out of commission after a stability test deemed it no longer load bearing. The beams and new railing were replaced in July.

REC MOBILE PURCHASED

The Parks and Recreation team expanded its repertoire this year with the introduction of the new Rec Mobile. The Rec Mobile is used not only to promote ongoing recreational activities but also to inform the community when the Rec Mobile is nearby, bringing fun to the area!



Local skaters enjoy the new pumptrack

PUMP TRACK COMPLETED AT SKATE PARK

The new pump track at the Norfolk Skate Park was completed in September. The pump track is a circular loop with hills and berms. There is no need to pedal or push in a pump track if ridden correctly. The track was funded through a donation from Lee W. DeKarske in the amount of \$114,201.82.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR RECEIVES AWARD

PJ Evans was presented with the 2023 New Professional Award for her advancements in recreation for the City at the Nebraska Recreation & Park Association Annual Conference.



Evans started working for the City of Norfolk Parks and Recreation Division in October of 2013 as the manager at AquaVenture Waterpark. She was then promoted as the Assistant Director of Recreation in October of 2022. She currently leads the aquatics staff for Aquaventure Waterpark, the recreation staff for recreation programs, and the athletics staff for our sports complexes and sports fields throughout the City.

Anticipated completion date
Memorial Day 2024



A student with UNL Outdoor Adventures Group tests out a drop structure at the North Fork Whitewater Park



North Fork Whitewater Park

WHITE WATER DROP STRUCTURES NEAR COMPLETION

Construction on the North Fork Whitewater Park continued in 2023, incorporating seven whitewater drop features into the river. These features are designed for beginner and intermediate level river recreation enthusiasts.

In February, the City Council approved the consolidation of two of the original eight structures into one, spanning the area between Hy-Vee north to Elm Avenue. This adjustment allowed space for the creation of a river surf wave, a novel concept in the United States, with only five existing in the country.

The surf feature is multifunctional and does not impede other rivercraft. Those in kayaks and canoes can choose to avoid the first drop if they prefer. In terms of

safety, surfers are required to yield the right of way to kayakers. Riverwise, a Colorado-based company specializing in river recreation and restoration projects nationwide, serves as the contractor for this project. Testing of the drop structures has occurred, including a visit from the University of Nebraska Outdoor Adventures group.

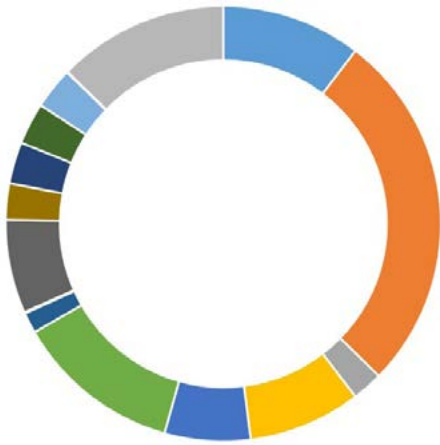
Safety training courses will be offered by the Parks and

Recreation Division, emphasizing the park's accessibility to beginner and intermediate-level river recreation enthusiasts. The completion of the Whitewater Park is anticipated by spring 2024. The park will be open to the public, with the first access point at Winter Park and additional access points at Johnson Park in Norfolk.

For updates, please follow the 'North Fork Whitewater Park' Facebook page.



New restroom at Johnson Park



FUNDING BREAKDOWN

City of Norfolk

■ Keno	\$ 1,681,701
■ Highway Allocation Funds (1st Street Bridge replacement)	\$ 4,360,000
■ Enterprise Funds	\$ 320,000
■ American Rescue Plan Act	\$ 1,354,508

Grants/Partnerships

■ Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District	\$ 1,031,701
■ NE Department of Natural Resources Grant	\$ 1,997,409
■ Norfolk Sanitary Improvement District	\$ 250,000
<input type="checkbox"/> DED CCCFF Planning Grant*	\$ 15,000
■ DED CCCFF Grant	\$ 1,125,000
■ DED CDBG Tourism Grant	\$ 435,000
■ Anonymous Donor	\$ 500,000
■ Peter Kiewit Foundation	\$ 500,000
■ Robert B. Daugherty Foundation	\$ 500,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Trees for Nebraska Towns*	\$ 8,502

Private Fundraising

■ Local Donors	\$ 2,055,468
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DED - Nebraska Department of Economic Development, CCCFF - Civic and Community Center Financing Fund, CDBG - Community Development Block Grant, * - not pictured on graph



The new pedestrian bridge in Johnson Park takes visitors across the North Fork Whitewater Park to a beach area and trails leading to downtown Norfolk

PEDESTRIAN AND RAILROAD BRIDGE INSTALLED

A new pedestrian bridge was constructed in 2023. The 120-foot bridge is located east of 1st Street and is expected to be open to the public in late spring 2024.

Additionally, the Union Pacific Railroad Company donated the railroad bridge originally situated northwest of 309 North 1st Street to the City in 2023.

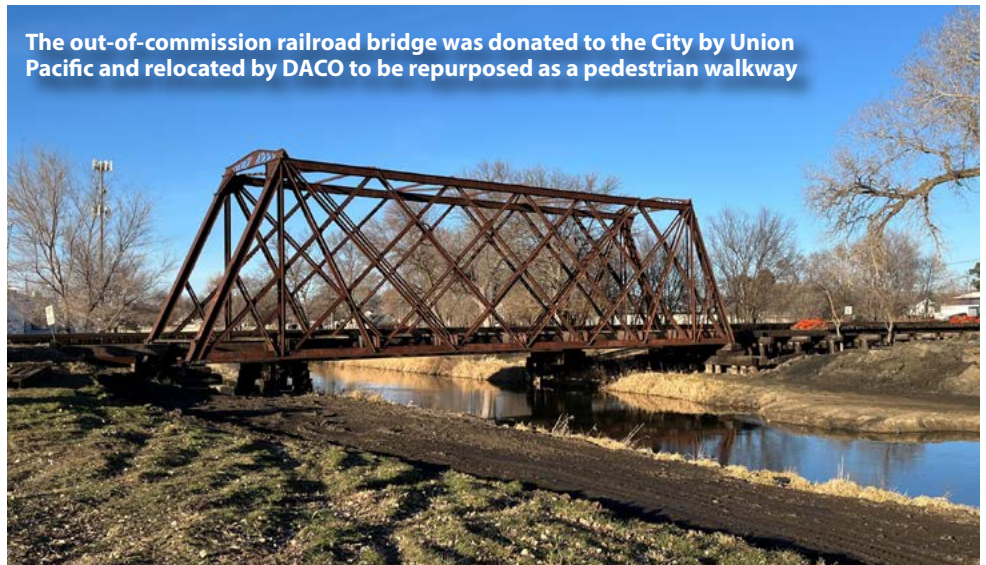
An agreement with DACO Construction Company paved the

way for the relocation of the retired railroad bridge to the west of North 1st Street, near the walking trail that connects to Johnson Park. There, the bridge will be placed on a new foundation and modified for use as a pedestrian walkway over the North Fork of the Elkhorn River. Residents will be able to access the new walkway by Memorial Day weekend 2024.

The construction of the new bridges serves to enhance pedestrian safety, providing secure and accessible pathways for residents to navigate and enjoy the new North Fork Whitewater Park.



River view looking west towards new 1st Street bridge



The out-of-commission railroad bridge was donated to the City by Union Pacific and relocated by DACO to be repurposed as a pedestrian walkway

Congressman Mike Flood with City officials, Wayne State representatives, NeighborWorks representatives, and developer Kelby Herman breaking ground on the new Phillip Avenue Apartments



Economic Development

GROUNDBREAKING FOR PHILLIP AVENUE APARTMENTS

A new \$1.5 million student housing development broke ground in August. The new housing development, located at 414 West Phillip Avenue, is the second student housing development to be used by Wayne State College's Growing Together Career Scholars program.

The housing units — 22 of which will be reserved for WSC students — will support program participants during their senior year as they complete two semesters of cooperative education with a local employer with the intention of convincing the students to stay in Norfolk.



Recently completed student housing in the Geary Redevelopment project

NeighborWorks of Northeast Nebraska and Progressive Builders are working together on the development. "The concept is that we help our young people to understand Northeast Nebraska and all of the value we have to offer for these young people to stay in this part of the state," said Marysz Rames, president of Wayne State College.

The project was funded in part by a Rural Workforce Housing grant which was received after the City dedicated \$200,000 of LB 840 dollars towards the match.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERING LIFELINE REOPENS NORTHERN HILLS

In October, Northern Hills was reopened for families needing affordable daycare in Norfolk. Northern Hills is owned and operated by local nonprofit group Women's Empowering Life Line. The facility is licensed to provide care for 84 children; however, future plans include expanded licensure that will allow the facility to handle up to 200 children. The WELL was awarded \$103,219.10 in LB 840 funds to be utilized toward the purchase of the building.

Mayor Josh Moenning with Women's Empowering Lifeline staff at the new Northern Hills daycare





Norfolk Crush construction in progress



Summer concert at Riverpoint Square in downtown Norfolk

SITE AND BUILDING DEVELOPMENT FUNDS AWARDED TO NORFOLK CRUSH AND MILK SPECIALTIES

Both Norfolk Crush and Milk Specialties were awarded funding from the Site and Building Development Fund (SBDF) through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. The SBDF aims to create favorable conditions for improving the industrial readiness of the state. City of Norfolk Economic Development staff coordinate the SBDF process.

It is a four-part legislative program designed to advance business innovation and strengthen workforce recruitment efforts in the state. The funds can be used for land and building acquisition, building construction or rehabilitation, site preparation, infrastructure development and improvements, engineering and design costs, technical assistance and planning, as well as pre-approved costs necessary for the development of industrial-ready sites and buildings.

DOWNTOWN NORFOLK RECEIVES REVITALIZATION GRANT, CREATIVE DISTRICT DESIGNATION

The City of Norfolk was awarded \$435,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to assist with commercial rehabilitation activities in downtown Norfolk in the form of façade improvements through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

The need for façade improvements was identified through a 2023 Norfolk Downtown Business survey. \$90,000 will be used for the sidewalk improvements of three mid-block crossings on Norfolk Avenue to provide street-to-sidewalk accessibility between Second and Third Street, Third and Fourth Street, and Fourth and Fifth Street.

The downtown façade improvements program will provide a 1:1 match of \$310,000, and the City of Norfolk will contribute \$22,500 for the sidewalk improvements.

From the grant funds, \$10,000 will be used for construction management and \$25,000 will be used for the general administration of the grant. The estimated total cost is \$767,500.

The proposed project will meet the national objective of minimizing a designated blighted and substandard area and Limited Clientele Activities through the removal of architectural barriers. No persons will be displaced as a result of CDBG activities. Applications for the funds will be available in 2024.

Also, the River Point Creative District was created this year and is made up of representatives from the Norfolk Arts Center, Norfolk Area Visitors Bureau and Northeast Nebraska Growing Together, along with many stakeholders. The vision is to be a thriving community for arts and culture driven by the vibrancy and creativity of its large population of young adult residents, whose energy will attract economic investment, residents, and visitors of all ages.

Conceptual rendering of new Cornhusker Nissan dealership in repurposed OfficeMax space



Planning & Development

2023 NORFOLK PLANNING COMMISSION

CHAIR

Dan Spray

VICE CHAIR

Dirk Waite

MEMBERS

Brandon Franklin

Chad Bryant

Cody Ronnfeldt

Kaycee Kube

Martin Griffith

Jill Sock

Jordan Mason

CORNHUSKER AUTO REPURPOSES VACANT RETAIL STORES

The Cornhusker Auto Group redevelopment plan was approved in 2023. The plan calls for the redevelopment of the old OfficeMax building on Highway 275 into a new location for Cornhusker Nissan. Cornhusker owner and president Al Rajae told the City Council in June, "Our sales with the Nissan store in the last seven years have tripled to the point that our growth has become unsustainable at our current location."

The growth of the dealership and advancements in the auto industry have also created a critical need for more service capabilities and Rajae said Nissan approached him over a year ago about the need to grow his current location and expand service offerings.

The project includes major renovations to the existing 20,000-square-foot building, including the addition of about 12,000 square feet of space, which will allow for a larger showroom and the expansion to 18 service bays. The current Nissan location can accommodate eight service bays.

The building, located on Krenzien Drive, has been sitting vacant since OfficeMax closed its store and vacated the space last year.

Sunset Plaza construction underway with plans to open TJ Maxx and Kohls in Spring 2024





Juice Stop opened with drive through

DRIVE-THRUS APPROVED IN DOWNTOWN NORFOLK

A code amendment has paved the way for restaurants within the central business zoning district to seek a conditional use permit for the operation of a drive-through or drive-in. Juice Stop, located at 120 South 3rd Street, became the first to apply for a drive-through.

Over the past couple of years, the former site of Cinema III Theatre has undergone a transformation into residential living areas with allocated space for commercial use on the ground level. Juice Stop has leased part of this commercial space, with its drive-thru situated on the south side of the building.



Isabel Finch testifying at a City Council meeting in favor of chickens and ducks allowed in city limits

WHAT THE CLUCK!? CHICKENS AND DUCKS NOW ALLOWED IN CITY LIMITS

The City Council approved city code changes this year to make way for residents to have chickens and ducks inside the city limits. Discussions on the provisions began after Isabel Finch, a 5th grader in Norfolk, sent a letter to Mayor Josh Moenning asking why she couldn't have a duck at her house. The new code states in addition to the permits, all of which would need to be renewed by January 1 each year, those wishing to keep chickens

and ducks need to seek approval from their neighbors. Citizens need the agreement of 100% of their neighbors with adjoining property lines, as well as the approval of 75% of their neighbors with surrounding property.

Additionally, owners would have to agree that if their chickens or ducks became at-large, city policy would allow animal control officials to take possession and deliver them to a registered farm owner, where they would become the property of the farm.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN PASSED

In December, the City Council approved the Affordable Housing Action Plan. The plan is required by the state. The state legislature passed LB-866 in 2020 which became statute 19-5505 requiring each city in Nebraska with a population of less than 50,000 to adopt an affordable housing action plan on or before January 1, 2024.

The City's plan meets the goals detailed in the state statute. Remaining Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act funds allowed the city to partner with NeighborWorks Northeast Nebraska. NeighborWorks will use these funds as part of the Rural Workforce Housing Fund and provide housing for middle

income and workforce housing in the Norfolk jurisdiction. Residents may have also heard about the City working with the Village of Hadar in forming the Northeast Nebraska Regional Land Bank to assist in providing affordable housing options.

Housing

opportunity. right at home.



Ho-Chunk Capital representatives with Norfolk Housing Agency board representatives and City staff outside the Kensington

KENSINGTON SOLD TO CONVERT TO MARRIOTT BOUTIQUE HOTEL

Ho-Chunk Capital officially acquired the Kensington in downtown Norfolk as of August 4, 2023. The more than \$14 million redevelopment project will convert the historic downtown building into a boutique hotel.

“This begins a new chapter in the life of the Kensington. We’re excited to watch its evolution and eventual return to a hub of activity and hospitality in the heart of downtown Norfolk. We appreciate Ho-Chunk Capital’s investment in Norfolk’s growth and confidence in our future,” said Mayor Josh Moenning.

“We look forward to preserving and revitalizing this historic Norfolk building,” said Dennis Johnson, then CEO of Ho-Chunk Capital. “This purchase symbolizes Ho-Chunk Capital’s growing investment in both Norfolk and Nebraska. We are honored to work with the Norfolk Housing Agency on this project.”

The Norfolk Housing Agency’s Mission is to assist low-income families, and it is exploring options to invest the proceeds of this sale into affordable housing projects in Norfolk.

HOUSING RELOCATES TO NEW OFFICE

For the first time in 25 years, the Norfolk Housing Agency has a new home. In April, the Housing Agency relocated from the Kensington to 1310 West Norfolk Avenue, Suite D, west of Walgreens.

The move was part of Ho-Chunk Capital’s purchase of

the Kensington in downtown Norfolk. “The Norfolk Housing Agency is proud to have owned and improved the Kensington building for over 25 years! The Kensington provided a welcoming home to Norfolk citizens over the years,” said Gary Bretschneider, Executive Director of the Norfolk Housing Agency.

Office hours remain the same, Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. A drop box is also available on the front wall for tenant payments and client documents at the new location.



Norfolk Housing Agency staff in their new office

A ribbon cutting was held for the new StoryWalk® at Warren Cook Park north of the library



Library *enrichment. right at home.*

RIBBON CUTTING HELD FOR STORYWALK TRAIL

A ribbon cutting was held in June for the Library's new StoryWalk® located in Warren Cook Park north of the library.

The StoryWalk® is an outdoor reading experience where visitors can travel along the walking trail and stop at its stations to read a page of a children's book, finishing the entire story by the time they complete the trail. It's a wonderful way to promote literacy and enjoy the outdoors with your children.

The panels are swapped out monthly so families can visit the park and read a new story. The project was made possible due to remaining funds from the half-cent sales tax increase for the library expansion that ended in March 2018.

Work is also underway on the new playground in Warren Cook Park. The playspace will be the first in Norfolk with features for children 6 months old and up. It should be completed in spring of 2024.

LIBRARY RECEIVES GOLD ACCREDITATION

The Nebraska Library Commission granted the Norfolk Public Library a Gold accreditation status in 2023, a first-ever achievement for the library. The library commission began providing levels of accreditation status around the year 2000.

The purpose of public library accreditation is to promote excellent library services in Nebraska communities. It serves as a measure of community pride in the library and the services it provides to its citizens.

"This is the result of sustained dedication and excellence over the course of years. I am very proud of the hard work that the library staff has put in to reach this accomplishment," said Jessica Chamberlain, Library Director.

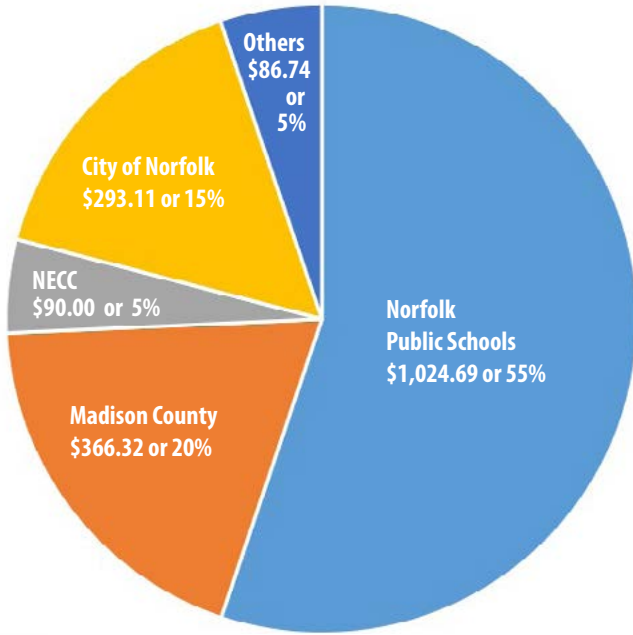
Accredited libraries are eligible for State Aid to public libraries and can apply for grants through the Nebraska Library Commission, as well as grant funding from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and the USDA.



Library staff with the recent Gold accreditation recognition

Property Tax Breakdown & Comparison

Where Your Property Tax Dollars Are Spent



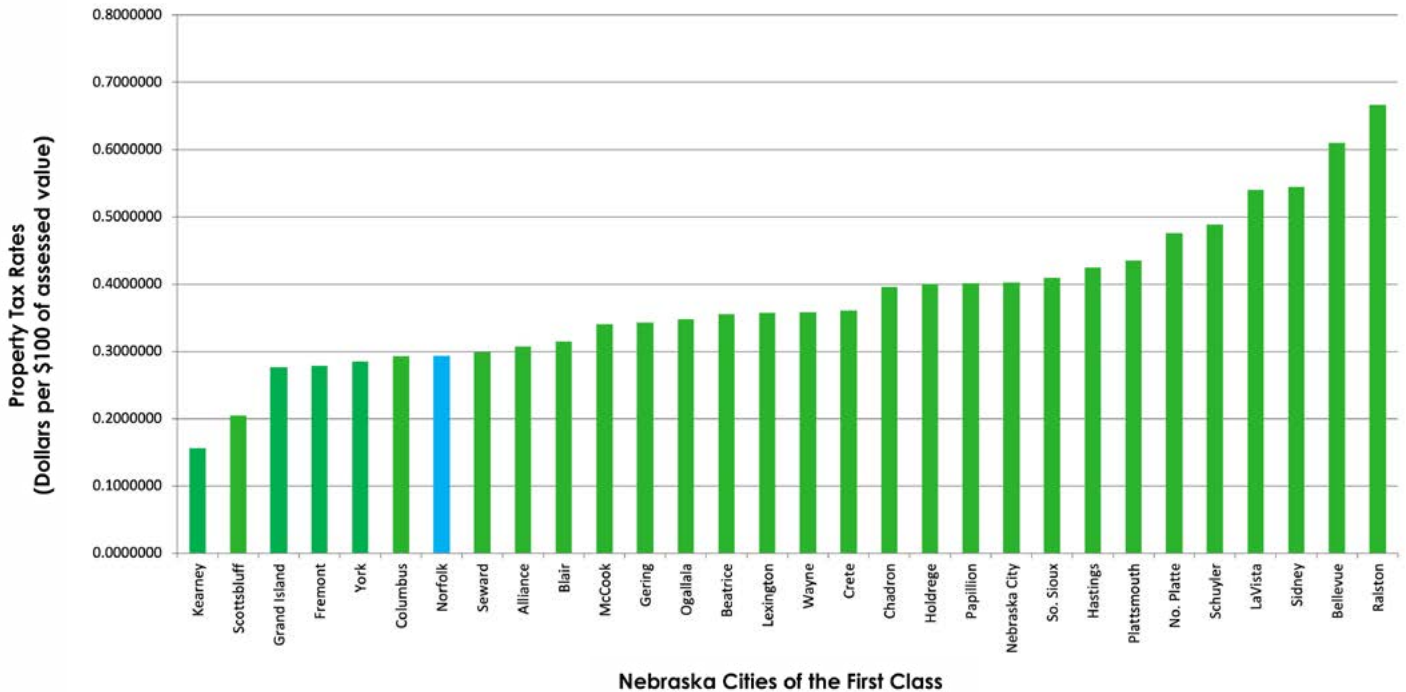
On a \$100,000 home, your City of Norfolk property taxes for 2023 are \$293.11. This is a \$11.19 decrease from 2022.

Property Tax Dollars

On a \$100,000 home, your property taxes for 2023 are \$1,860.86.

Norfolk Public Schools	\$1,024.69	55%
Madison County	\$ 366.32	20%
Northeast Community College	\$ 90.00	5%
City of Norfolk	\$ 293.11	15%
Others	\$ 86.74	5%
Total	\$ 1,860.86	100%

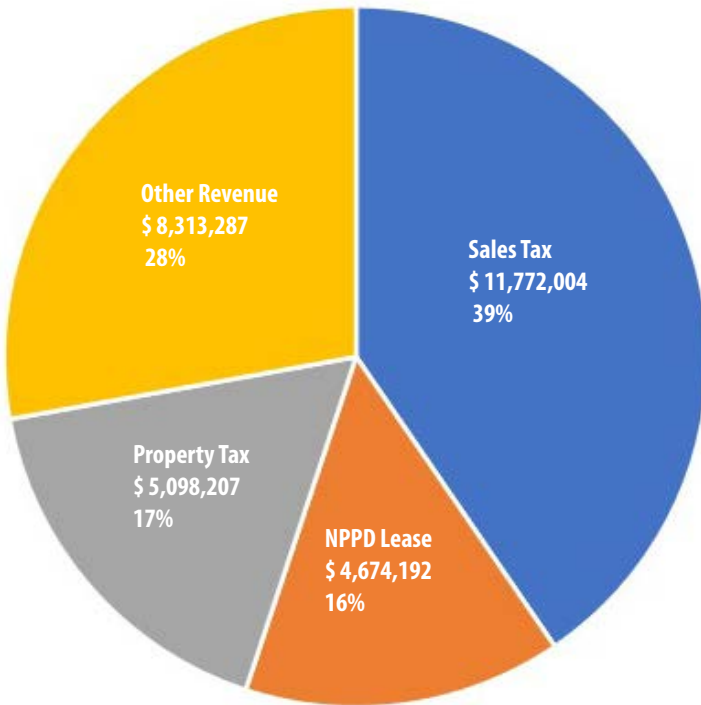
Comparison of Property Tax Rates in 2023



Revenues & Expenditures

General Fund Revenues

FY 2022 - 2023



General Fund Revenues

FY 2022 - 2023

■ Sales Tax	\$ 11,772,004	39%
■ Nebraska Public Power District Lease	\$ 4,674,192	16%
■ Property Tax	\$ 5,098,207	17%
■ Other Revenue	\$ 8,313,287	28%
Total Revenue	\$ 29,857,690	100%

General Fund Expenditures

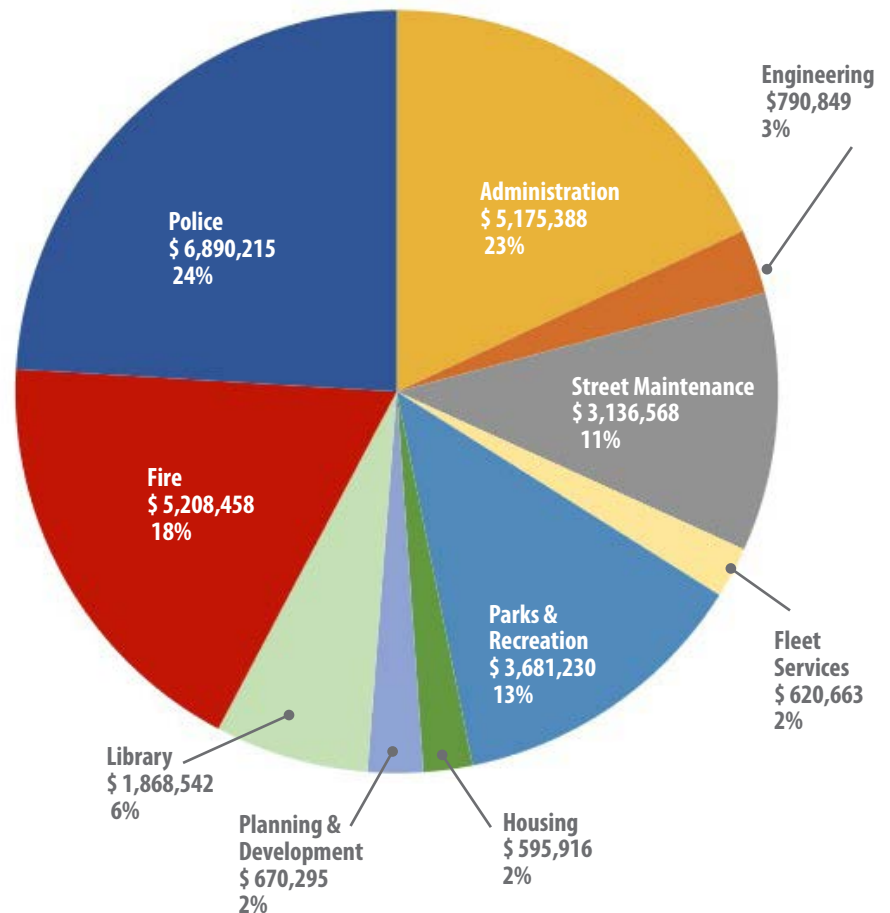
Distribution by Division or Function

General Fund Expenditures

Distribution by Division or Function

FY 2022-2023

■ Administration	\$ 5,175,388	18%
■ Engineering	\$ 790,849	3%
■ Street Maintenance	\$ 3,136,568	11%
■ Fleet Services	\$ 620,663	2%
■ Parks & Recreation	\$ 3,681,230	13%
■ Housing	\$ 595,916	2%
■ Planning & Development	\$ 670,295	2%
■ Library	\$ 1,868,542	7%
■ Fire	\$ 5,208,458	18%
■ Police	\$ 6,890,215	24%
Total	\$ 28,638,124	100%





309 N. 5th Street
Norfolk, NE 68701



CITY SERVICES

Fire & Police - emergency	911
Fire Division - non-emergency	402-844-2050
Police Division - non-emergency	402-644-8700
Administration	402-844-2000
Building Services	402-844-2060
Housing Division	402-844-2080
Library	402-844-2100
Parks & Recreation	402-844-2250
Planning and Development	402-844-2280
Economic Development	402-844-2260
Solid Waste - Transfer Station	402-844-2231
Street Division	402-844-2180
Water and Sewer Maintenance & Emergency Service 24x7	402-844-2210
Snow information	402-844-2299
Tree Bud Program	402-844-2000

For emergency alerts text: "NorfolkAlerts" to 41372.
For City news text: "JOINNORFOLKNE" to 22828.
Learn more and subscribe to City e-News at www.norfolkne.gov.
Interact with us on Twitter @[NorfolkNE](https://twitter.com/NorfolkNE) or on Facebook at *City of Norfolk Nebraska Government*.

MOVING IN? WELCOME TO NORFOLK!

NPPD - Electricity	877-275-6773
Black Hills Energy - Gas	888-890-5554
City - Water	402-844-2000
Auto Licensing	402-454-3311
Animal Shelter	402-750-4665
Norfolk Public Schools	402-644-2500
Norfolk Public Transportation	402-379-4595
Area Agency On Aging	402-370-3454
Meals on Wheels	402-371-8626

FAMILY FUN

Norfolk Public Library	402-844-2100
AquaVenture Waterpark	402-844-2270
Elkhorn Valley Museum	402-371-3886
Norfolk Arts Center	402-371-7199
Madison County Museum	402-992-1221

Visit NorfolkNE.gov, VisitNorfolkNE.com, or www.NorfolkNow.org to learn more about the Norfolk area.