



# City of Hampton

22 Lincoln Street  
Hampton, VA 23669  
[www.hampton.gov](http://www.hampton.gov)

## Council Approved Minutes - Final City Council Work Session

*Mayor Donnie R. Tuck*  
*Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray*  
*Councilmember Chris L. Bowman*  
*Councilmember Eleanor Weston Brown*  
*Councilmember Steven L. Brown*  
*Councilmember Billy Hobbs*  
*Councilmember Chris Snead*

*STAFF: Mary Bunting, City Manager*  
*Cheran Cordell Ivery, City Attorney*  
*Katherine K. Glass, Clerk of Council*

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**Wednesday, September 8, 2021**

**1:00 PM**

**Council Chambers**

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### CALL TO ORDER

Vice Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. All members of the City Council were present with the exception of Mayor Tuck. Vice Mayor Gray explained that Mayor Tuck's attendance was required at another City event and that he will be joining the rest of Council later in the day.

**Present** 6 - Councilmember Chris L. Bowman, Councilmember Eleanor Weston Brown, Councilmember Steven L. Brown, Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray, Councilmember Billy Hobbs, and Councilmember Chris Snead

**Excused** 1 - Mayor Donnie R. Tuck

### JIMMY GRAY PRESIDED

### AGENDA

1. [21-0246](#) Downtown Hampton Business Improvement District Implementation Strategy

**Attachments:** [Fly-Through Video](#)  
[Presentation \(at time of publication\)](#)  
[Presentation - Updated 9/7/2021](#)

City Manager Mary Bunting introduced the item and reminded everyone about the ongoing strategic planning efforts for the future of downtown. She then introduced Thomas Tingle, President of Guernsey Tingle Architects, to provide information about the concept and cost estimates associated with implementing the plan.

Mr. Tingle greeted everyone and shared the three goals for implementing the ideas for downtown. They are to identify readily achievable improvements for a more active, vibrant and friendly community; to enhance infrastructure to underutilized parcels of land for new development as valuable private real estate assets; and to prioritize and quantify the required City infrastructure investment needed to incentivize private-sector investment.

Mr. Tingle displayed a map which depicted the areas for consideration. Nearby streets include Lincoln Street, Armistead Avenue, Queens Way, Queen Street and Settlers Landing Road.

The next several slides of the presentation that Mr. Tingle shared listed some of the stakeholders concerns and recommendations for the project and their responses to the questions “What will draw people to downtown and the riverfront”? and “What is unique about downtown Hampton”?

Mr. Tingle continued speaking about the planning efforts and shared that some of the things which already attract people to the area, known as gravity nodes and connections, have been identified as the Queens Way block, Mill Point Park and the Riverfront.

Mr. Tingle turned the floor over to Jarrod Katzer, Landscape Architect with WPL, who spoke about the identified implication focus areas beginning with the East Queens Way focus area. The overall goal for this area is to create a pedestrian-only outdoor dining experience and pedestrian-friendly character on East Queen Street between Wine Street and Mill Point Park. This will also involve creating tree planter knock-outs and re-creating an easy-to-maintain pedestrian light scheme.

Mr. Katzer paused to answer Councilwoman Brown’s question about handicapped accessible curbs in the East Queens Way focus area. He explained that the curbs will not be handicapped accessible; however, the ramps will be. He noted that the preferred outcome is to have handicapped access building to building, but the plan is to have handicapped access approximately every 16 feet. Mr. Katzer then reviewed the remaining slides of the presentation related to the East Queens Way focus area.

Mr. Katzer spoke about the next focus area, the South King Street area. This area will maintain its historical nature and will be designed to bring foot traffic to the area to support businesses and other events such as fairs. The South Wine Street area will be designed to create a more lively connection between Queens Way and the

Riverfront area and will enhance the City's resiliency profile.

Mr. Tingle returned to the podium to speak about The Riverfront Park (Carousel Park) focus area. The goal for this area is to establish the Riverfront Park as a primary downtown event space and to create a unique multipurpose performance space. This large green space will also create an opportunity to become a major magnet for downtown, create a connection between the City and the riverfront and provide an additional pedestrian connection. Mr. Tingle noted that part of the recommendation is to remove the unutilized carousel to free up space for additional activities.

Mr. Tingle continued speaking about the Riverfront Park focus area; water as an asset in that area; and the potential for a water-based amphitheater.

Mr. Tingle spoke about the plans for the remaining focus areas. The pedestrian experience will be enhanced at Riverfront West by connecting the riverfront walk around to Settlers Landing Road. There is also potential for additional restaurants, gathering spaces, shops and a waterfront walkway there. The Old Hampton Lane area will be enhanced by revitalization of the parking deck and retail plaza. There will also be opportunities for new restaurants and a more pedestrian-friendly walking space. Riverfront East will be enhanced by improvements to the pedestrian experience and the potential for additional riverfront activities. Mill Point Park will be revitalized and may serve as a new location for the carousel, a new amphitheater, festivals and a living shoreline along the riverfront. The Mill Point Riverfront walk will have a more public, open feel and will provide function to help with resiliency and storm water management and serve as a space for people to make a connection between downtown and the riverfront walk.

Mr. Tingle turned the floor over to Robyn Niss, Civil Engineer with Kimley-Horn, to speak about the transportation component.

Ms. Niss shared that her role in the process involved determining what areas needed technical expertise and developing engineering solutions to help invigorate downtown.

Ms. Niss spoke about some of the areas in need of this work beginning with the Settlers Landing Corridor. She announced that people view this area as one which has a stark divide between the two parts of downtown; therefore, the goal became to determine how to keep the road functional, while enhancing the experience for pedestrians and bikers. She suggested that this area could be enhanced by reducing the pavement to an amount needed for the road to function while creating excess space for pedestrians, bikers and storm water; having an outdoor plaza at

the Air and Space Center with features which would indicated that people have arrived in downtown Hampton; eliminating unnecessary features such as excessive medians and traffic signals to reclaim parking spaces; and adding protected street bike lanes, green infrastructure, pavement and hardscaping improvements. Ms. Niss displayed a few slides which depicted all of the renderings described above.

Ms. Niss proceeded with the next area for improvement, parcel readiness. She explained that while there is a lot of great development in Hampton, some infrastructure concerns exist such as infrastructure which blocks areas or is in need of improvement. She shared that discussions are underway with the Planning and Public Works Departments about former and ongoing studies. The goal of these discussions is to develop one document about needed improvements in downtown Hampton to accelerate development in each parcel. Ms. Niss displayed a few color-coded maps which indicated what infrastructure is prime for development; what infrastructure is satisfactory for development, but may need improvements; and what infrastructure cannot be considered, for example, City-owned buildings.

Ms. Niss turned the floor over to William Almond, Principal Landscape Architect with WPL, to speak about resiliency.

Mr. Almond spoke about infiltration, slowing rainwater, recharge and improving water quality. He emphasized that storm water management is a regional solution which expands beyond the downtown implementation plan. Such regional solutions may include restoration of waterways and wetlands along Bright's Creek. Mr. Almond also emphasized that many of the implementation concepts being recommended for downtown can help create a network of storm water management and flood protection and demonstrates Hampton's commitment to resiliency.

Mr. Almond shared a success story about the ambassador program at the Virginia Beach Ocean front. This program provides an enhanced, clean environment for guests and tourists. Clean and safe services are provided daily allowing guests to have a more personal experience. This program also assists with homelessness and law enforcement.

Mr. Tingle returned to the podium and shared that the stakeholders have expressed a desire for more quality activities in downtown in an attempt to attract people to the area. For example, Williamsburg hosts an event called "An Occasion for the Arts" in the fall. This semi-national attraction brings people from all over the east coast to Williamsburg. Mr. Tingle emphasized the importance of finding these types of seasonal opportunities and events to take place downtown in addition to day to day events such as farmers markets.

Mr. Tingle concluded the presentation by sharing a slide which provided information about the budget strategy for the proposal; the cost for short-term, mid-term and long-term improvements; and initial projects for investment. He then opened the floor for questions and comments from Council.

Councilwoman Brown thanked everyone, including the Downtown BID, for their efforts and for rethinking the issues of Downtown in an innovative way. She said that she is in support of this effort and is excited about the resiliency component which showcases how flooding and sea-level rise can be addressed. She asked if any thought was given to street grids and connectivity because there are many dead ends downtown.

Mr. Tingle said that there is potential for a connector between King Street and Wine Street, not only to improve accessibility and maneuverability for cars, but also in the event vehicles try to bypass Kings Way which is now a pedestrian way. He added that there are also other opportunities to provide pedestrian-friendly cross connections.

Councilwoman Brown commented that that would make those parts of downtown feel more vibrant. She also endorsed the innovative idea of “going up”, for example, the plans for the top of the parking garage, the new multi-purpose building and the Air and Space Center as these provide more opportunities to enjoy the view and vibrancy of the water.

Mr. Tingle shared that many places across the country have roof-top dining and other types of experiences and this is a great opportunity for Hampton.

Councilwoman Snead supported the initiative and agreed with Councilwoman Brown’s comments. She referenced the cost sheet which does not show a line item for resiliency and asked whether resiliency is being funded through another mechanism.

Mr. Tingle explained that the cost for the resiliency piece is partially incorporated, for example, repurposing of the parking lot in the plan for downtown. However, that will not be enough to solve all of the resiliency problems for downtown leaving some uncertainty with regard to those numbers. He added that Waggoner and Ball (Architects) is working with the City on a larger footprint, and reminded everyone that this will be a regional solution and this plan is not a full solution to solving storm water, sea level rise and resiliency issues for downtown.

Councilman Bowman commended everyone for the great concept and suggested that Buckroe Beach could serve as a location for the carousel if Mill Point Park does

not work. He also recommended that lighting and security cameras be adequate, not only for aesthetic purposes, but also to provide safety for citizens and visitors because people tend to visit areas where they feel safe.

Mr. Tingle agreed that a combination of vibrancy and safety will make this a more successful project. He also said that part of the work was to suggest a place for the carousel and agreed that the historic Buckroe Amusement Park could potentially be a future location for it.

Vice Mayor Gray agreed that this is a wonderful vision for making downtown more vibrant; emphasized the need to open the waterfront allowing people access and view of the water; and said that something has been built on every corner downtown inadvertently blocking the view of the waterfront. He also shared that, in his opinion, replacing the carousel with a restaurant will only put another structure there and obstruct the view and suggested that putting the restaurant in another location would leave an open, broad view of the waterfront. He thanked all involved and complimented them for their work on this project.

Mr. Tingle assured everyone that Vice Mayor Gray's suggestions will be taken into consideration.

Ms. Bunting made remarks about financing the project. She shared that some things can be accomplished with funds that Council has set aside for downtown masterplan implementation, while other parts may qualify for aspects of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Resiliency infrastructure, for example, may be eligible for those funds. She continued saying that other funds may also be available in future CIP funds and staff will put together opportunities for Council to consider these things should they find them desirable. She clarified that funds will not come from one place, one pot or in one year; instead, this simply provides a blue print for implementing the vision of the downtown master plan. She said that this is a great step moving forward and reiterated that staff will work to bring elements of this to Council as they identify sources of revenue.

Vice Mayor Gray said having heard no opposition, he assumed this means nod of approval of the work and that we should move forward. There were no expressions of opposition.

Vice Mayor Gray thanked the team and all involved for their work and said that everyone looks forward to making this vision a reality for downtown Hampton.

## REGIONAL ISSUES

There were no regional issues to be discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

There were no items of new business.

**CLOSED SESSION**

2. [21-0244](#) Closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711.A (.1),(.3) and (.6) to discuss appointments as outlined on the agenda with the addition of the Grievance Board; to discuss the disposition of publicly held real property in the Downtown area of the City where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the City; and to discuss or consider the investment of public funds where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the City would be adversely affected.

At 1:53 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Eleanor Weston Brown and seconded by Councilmember Steven Brown, that this Closed Session - Motion be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 6 - Councilmember Bowman, Councilmember Weston Brown, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Hobbs and Councilmember Snead

Mayor Tuck arrived during the closed session.

**Present** 7 - Councilmember Chris L. Bowman, Councilmember Eleanor Weston Brown, Councilmember Steven L. Brown, Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray, Councilmember Billy Hobbs, Councilmember Chris Snead, and Mayor Donnie R. Tuck

3. [21-0174](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Hampton Redevelopment and Housing Authority
4. [21-0227](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Hampton Economic Development Authority

**CERTIFICATION**

5. [21-0248](#) Resolution Certifying Closed Session

At 3:02 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Billy Hobbs and seconded by Councilmember Chris Snead, that this Closed Session - Certification be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman, Councilmember Weston Brown, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Hobbs, Councilmember Snead and Mayor Tuck

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 3:02 p.m.

**Contact Info:**

Clerk of Council, 757-727-6315, [council@hampton.gov](mailto:council@hampton.gov)

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Donnie R. Tuck  
Mayor

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Katherine K. Glass, CMC  
Clerk of Council

Date approved by Council \_\_\_\_\_