

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: Norfolk Cultural and Convention CenterOther names/site number: SCOPE; Chrysler Hall; DHR ID 122-5968

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. LocationStreet & number: 201 E. Brambleton AveCity or town: Norfolk State: VA County: Independent CityNot For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national X statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private: ☐
Public – Local ☒
Public – State ☐
Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s) ☐
District ☒
Site ☐
Structure ☐
Object ☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>3</u>	<u>45</u>	objects
<u>7</u>	<u>45</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Theater; Auditorium; Music Facility; Sports Facility

TRANSPORTATION/Parking Garage

LANDSCAPE/Plaza

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Theater; Auditorium; Music Facility; Sports Facility

TRANSPORTATION/Parking Garage

LANDSCAPE/Plaza

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/ New Formalism

MODERN MOVEMENT/ Neo-Expressionism

MODERN MOVEMENT/ Brutalism

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE; METAL/Bronze, Steel,
Aluminum; GLASS; STONE/Travertine

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center is an exceptional representation of mid-twentieth-century Modern Movement architecture and urban planning practices. The complex encompasses several city blocks and includes a domed arena, known as SCOPE, a theater, named Chrysler Hall, a raised podium or plaza, and a below-grade parking garage. Designed by Italian architect Pier Luigi Nervi and Norfolk architectural firm Williams and Tazewell & Associates, the Center utilizes Modern architectural design and engineering methods to create a superblock primarily composed of reinforced concrete. Nervi was internationally known for his achievements in the skillful use of soaring concrete buttresses and ferrocement domes, such as those incorporated in the design of SCOPE. The Neo-Expressionist SCOPE is expertly juxtaposed against the New Formalist style Chrysler Hall, redesigned by Nervi's local counterpart William and Tazewell & Associates from Nervi's original plans. The district includes three contributing buildings, one contributing structure, and three contributing objects. The district also consists of forty-five non-contributing objects, which are primarily smaller secondary elements of the plaza that have been replaced or updated over time due to high use or modern technology. These replaced objects are the plaza flagpoles, integrated benches, and a monument sign. All of the district's primary resources contribute to its significance. The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center,

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constructed between 1968 and 1972, retains a high degree of integrity associated with its historic and architectural significance.

Narrative Description

Setting

The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center is a multi-level complex composed of four interconnected resources situated on 10.7 acres. The district is an example of a “superblock,” defined as a very large commercial or residential block closed to through traffic but crossed by pedestrian walks and, sometimes, by access roads, and often defined with grassed malls.¹ The Center is predominantly situated on a large, raised plaza that takes up what were once multiple city blocks in downtown Norfolk. The property is bound by W. Brambleton Avenue to the north, St. Paul’s Boulevard to the east, E. Charlotte Street to the south, and Monticello Avenue to the west. The Center is surrounded by relatively dense urban streetscapes to the south and west, and heavily trafficked vehicular corridors to north and east. The arena building, or SCOPE, covers a majority of the plaza and is situated on the northwest corner of the site, while the theater, or Chrysler Hall, sits on the southeast corner of the plaza. In the southwest corner of the property is a large rectangular fountain that is integrated into the plaza foundation. The northeast end of the plaza includes thirty-two integrally constructed circular planters laid out in a rectangular grid. The property has small trees and other vegetation along the perimeter and in planter boxes spread across the plaza. Also part of the complex is an underground parking garage that is accessed by a ramp on St. Paul’s Boulevard, as well as an underground exhibition hall.

Inventory

The inventory below is the result of reconnaissance level survey of the Norfolk Cultural and Convention center conducted in May 2018 and again in May 2019. The surveyor documented all resources within the district including significant secondary resources. Because of the nature and design of the complex and its historic function, individual resources were determined using the Functionally Related Structures guidance provided by the National Park Service as well as each resource’s historic footprint and original building plans, including cross sections showing the vertical and horizontal relationships among the resources. The survey resulted in the identification of four contributing primary resources, including three buildings and one structure. With regard to secondary resources, there are three contributing objects and forty-five noncontributing objects. The plaza fountain and planters are not counted separately from the plaza structure as they are integrated into the material composition of the plaza foundation. Instead, they are contributing features of the primary resource. Of the noncontributing objects, twenty-eight are benches that are part of the original design but have since been altered, sixteen are new flagpoles, and one is the aforementioned replacement, noncontributing sign.

¹ Although a common development type in other parts of the U.S., few mid-twentieth century, Modern Movement superblocks have been documented in Virginia.

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Each entry in the inventory below identifies the primary and secondary (where applicable) resource, the resource type (building, site, structure, or object), number of stories, architectural style, approximate construction date, and contributing or noncontributing status organized by DHR ID (tertiary ID number used to key attached Sketch Map). Resources within the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center are considered contributing if they were constructed during the district's period of significance (1968-1972), are associated with the district's areas of significance, and retain architectural integrity to convey their significant associations. Alterations to contributing resources were evaluated based on the overall impact to the character-defining features of the resource. Each entry also includes a detailed architectural description. Additional survey data and a surveyor assessment for each resource has also been prepared in conjunction with this nomination and can be accessed via the Virginia Department of Historic Resources architectural survey archives and/or the Virginia Cultural Resource Information System (VCRIS).

122-5968-0001

Primary Resource: **SCOPE (SCOPE; Exhibition Hall) (Building), Stories: 2, Style: Neo-Expressionism, Ca. 1971, Contributing Total: 1**

The Norfolk SCOPE is a Neo-Expressionist style domed arena building supported by a ring of flying buttresses constructed with a mixture of precast and cast-in-place concrete. Behind the concrete buttresses is a curved curtain wall of aluminum frame windows and doors with bronze plated glass. The arena dome is also constructed of a mixture of precast and cast-in-place concrete. The dome's ceiling is reinforced by weaved ribs of concrete that create a geometric pattern on the reflected plan. The building has entryways on the north, south, east, and west elevations at the plaza level and also has a lower-level entrance on the south façade accessed via the attached underground parking garage. The south façade, which includes the main entry, also features a sunken garden that stretches along both sides of the entry corridor and has a variety of ornamental vegetation. At the far west end of the sunken garden is a covered terrace that serves as an extension of a restaurant located on the lower level of the arena.

The interior of SCOPE is separated into two levels: the upper and lower concourses. Along the inner perimeter of the lower concourse are several mechanical and storage spaces, dressing and locker rooms, and offices. The outer ring features additional dressing rooms, a kitchen, loading ramps and storage facilities, and meeting and conference rooms. The lower concourse is also the location of the arena floor, which has approximately 25,000 square feet of floor space. The seating capacity of the arena is nearly 12,000 with several levels of seating extending along the perimeter of the oblong floor. In addition to seating, the upper concourse includes concession stands, men's and women's restrooms, and storage.

Connected to the lower concourse of SCOPE is a 65,000 square foot Exhibition Hall. When combined with the meeting and conference rooms attached to SCOPE, the total exhibition space within the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center is approximately 140,000 square feet, or enough room to accommodate 600 booths. The Exhibition Hall is a large, open, rectangular space that has more than fifty square columns that are laid out in a grid pattern. The typical

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meeting or conference room has carpeted or tiled flooring, dropped tile ceilings with florescent lighting, and a wall of windows overlooking the exhibition hall. The rooms are rectangular or square shaped and have accordion partitions that allow the spaces to expand or divide for a variety of uses.

122-5968-0002

Primary Resource: **Chrysler Hall (Chrysler Hall; Little Theater) (Building), Stories: 3, Style: New Formalism, Ca. 1972, Contributing Total: 1**

Chrysler Hall is modeled after the Lincoln Center's Philharmonic Hall in New York City. The exterior of the theater uses the classically derived motifs of mid-twentieth century New Formalism with the simplistic and functionalist materials and engineering methods compatible with its arena counterpart. Each elevation features rhomboidal columns that are constructed of concrete with a rough, buff-colored finish. The exterior walls, which are nearly fifty feet in height, are covered in travertine at the corners and along the east elevation. A curtain wall of bronze-polished plate windows with aluminum frames expands across the center of the façade, as well as the north and south elevations. On the ground level of the west elevation (façade) and south elevation are ticket windows with travertine exteriors. The east elevation also has a ticket window and entrance that provides direct access to Little Hall Theater and the lower levels of Chrysler Hall. The west façade features an outdoor balcony on the second (or Dress Circle) level with bronze aluminum railing across the middle five bays overlooking the plaza and fountain. The north elevation features a service entrance and a loading ramp near the entrance of the parking garage along St. Paul's Boulevard.

The interior of Chrysler Hall features five levels including the basement, substage, lobby/orchestra level, dress circle level, and the balcony level. The basement level includes mostly service and mechanical spaces including the boiler room, orchestra pit, storage facilities, and a few dressing rooms. The lower level of Little Hall Theater is also accessed via the basement level. The majority of the substage level is comprised of dressing rooms, as well as the balcony level of Little Hall Theater located in the northwest corner.

The lobby and orchestra level include the main stage, which measures approximately fifty-six-feet wide by fifty-two-feet deep. The central stage area is flanked by side stage areas that are connected to multiple dressing rooms and storage areas. The lobby and orchestral level also feature the main seating area, which includes more than twenty rows of seating with exits integrated along the side walls. From the main stage, all three levels of seating are visible, including the dress circle and balcony levels, which are supported by reinforced concrete and finished with plaster that curves like ski slopes along the wood paneled walls, creating a visual contrast. The theater ceiling features a triangular geometric pattern comprised of painted flattened steel. The west, north, and south sides of this level house the public lobby, flanked by elevator shafts at the north and south corners; these circulation paths provide continuous access from the lower levels of the garage through to the upper floors of the theater. The floors are finished with terrazzo tile and the stairs are constructed of reinforced concrete with travertine

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treads. The mahogany handrail is supported by solid bronze balusters that trace the sides of the double staircase.

At the top of the double staircase is the two-story dress circle lobby, finished with terrazzo flooring and travertine tile wall covering. The side lobbies on the dress circle level are covered with carpeting and have wood paneling along the wall outside of the theater. The stairs on the side lobbies are rectangular in shape and have a geometric central stair column that mirrors the shape of the exterior columns. Along the north side lobby are offices, several of which are hidden behind paneled wood doors so as not to disturb the finishes.

The balcony level, accessed via the elevator and/or side lobby stairs, has additional offices along the side lobbies, again concealed by wood paneled doors. The carpeting is continued throughout the third level. This level also has a restaurant in the southeast corner that has been converted from the office and mechanical space depicted in the original plans.

122-5968-0003

Primary Resource: **Plaza (Plaza; Podium) (Structure), Style: Brutalism, Ca. 1971,**
Contributing Total: 1

SCOPE and Chrysler Hall sit on opposite corners of a nearly 800,000-square-foot plaza that is raised more than six feet above the street level in some places. The walls of the plaza, as well as its integrated planters and fountain, are constructed of a rough concrete aggregate that has a corrugated finish topped with precast concrete coping. The plaza planters and fountain are original features of the plaza design and because they are integrated into the structure of the plaza, they are not considered separate resources, but contributing elements or features of the plaza itself. The top of the plaza is paved with octagonal and square brick pavers, which replaced the original hexagonal brick pavers sometime in the late twentieth century. There are three stair access points along St. Paul's Boulevard, two of which are on either end of the Exhibition Entry Canopy. On the west end of the plaza, along Monticello Avenue, is a large, tiered staircase from the street level up to the plaza. There are several other access points along Monticello and Charlotte Streets with stairs and/or ramps from the sidewalk up to the plaza level. On the southeast corner is a large rectangular fountain measuring approximately 141 feet by ninety-eight feet, which is integrated into the foundation of the plaza structure. On the northwestern side of the plaza, thirty-two circular planters are arranged in a grid-like pattern, each featuring minimal vegetation and small trees. Both the circular planters and those that wrap the perimeter of the plaza are original to the plaza design and are integrated into the foundation of the structure. Other features which are fixed to the plaza, many of which were incorporated into the original design of the resource, include an Exhibition Entry Canopy, two globe light fixtures, twenty-eight benches, a monument sign, and sixteen non-historic flagpoles. These features are described below as secondary resources.

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Secondary Resource: Exhibition Entry Canopy (Exhibition Entry) (Object), Style: Neo-Expressionism, Ca. 1971, Contributing Total: 1

The Exhibition Entry Canopy is centrally located on the east side of the plaza and covers the access to the above-grade plaza and below-grade Exhibition Hall of SCOPE. The rectangular canopy design features several of the character-defining features of the overall complex, including an inverted dome that mimics the ceiling of the arena resting on truncated rhomboidal columns similar to those of Chrysler Hall.

Secondary Resource: Podium Light Fixtures (Podium Lighting) (Object), Style: Neo-Expressionism, Ca. 1971, Contributing Total: 2

Two podium light fixtures are located near the southwest corner of the plaza, flanking the tiered stair that leads to Monticello Avenue. Each of the fixtures features seven globe lights arranged in a circular pattern. The base of the light fixtures is composed of a mixture of pre-cast and poured concrete.

Secondary Resource: Podium Benches (Object), Style: No discernable style, Ca. 1972 Non-contributing Total: 28

Twenty-eight benches line the perimeter of the plaza in their original locations. While the pre-cast concrete bases of the benches remain unaltered, the original vertically arranged wood slats that composed the seats of the benches have been replaced with composite boards, an alteration that caused incompatible changes to the benches' original appearance, palette, and feeling. The benches, therefore, are noncontributing objects.

Secondary Resource: Flag Poles (Object), Style: No discernable style, Ca. 2024, Non-contributing Total: 16

Sixteen symmetrically spaced, metal flagpoles are located just south of the fountain near the southwestern edge of the plaza. The flagpoles are cylindrical in shape and are fixed to the plaza foundation. The flagpoles were installed in ca. 2024, replacing the original fifteen flagpoles.

Secondary Resource: Monument Sign (Object), Style: No discernable style, Ca. 2019, Non-Contributing Total: 1

The three-sided, triangular monument sign is located in the northeast corner of the plaza and was installed in 2019. This sign replaced a smaller, three-sided monument sign, which itself had replaced the original dual-sided sign installed in 1972.

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Primary Resource: **Parking Garage (Building), Stories: 2, Style: Brutalism, Ca. 1971,**
Contributing Total: 1

The two-story, underground parking garage is constructed of reinforced concrete and has concrete block walls supported by a grid of concrete columns across both levels. The garage, which can accommodate approximately 615 vehicles, is accessed via a ramp from St. Paul's Boulevard and has ramps on the west and east ends that allow access to the lower level. The upper level of the parking garage has direct access to the lower level of SCOPE. The upper level also provides direct access to the Exhibition Hall and Chrysler Hall (via the elevator lobby). The lower level of the garage must take an elevator or stair to enter one of the main entertainment venues.

Integrity Analysis

The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center retains a high level of architectural integrity. The Center is situated on an expansive city block above the pedestrian level on a raised podium that retains its original setting within its immediate urban surroundings and high-trafficked thoroughfares. Unmoved from its original site in Downtown Norfolk, the Center maintains the location, spatial arrangement, and interconnected nature of its resources as originally designed. Therefore, the property, bound by W. Brambleton Avenue to the North, St. Paul's Boulevard to the East, E. Charlotte Street to the South, and Monticello Avenue to the West, retains integrity of location and setting.

The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center also retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, with only minor alterations. On the exterior, loss of original materials occurred sometime in the late twentieth century when the original hexagonal brick pavers were replaced with an octagonal and square brick paving pattern. While this alteration resulted in the loss of a considerable volume of historic materials, the use of replacement materials of similar composition and color lessened the resultant visual effect. Kept intact were the overall design and function of the plaza itself, which retains the vast majority of its original design features, including light fixtures, a fountain, and planters. Other exterior alterations include the replacement of window glass along the curtain wall of SCOPE and Chrysler Hall, which are more opaque and darker than the original bronze tint. The replacement glass fits within the original window openings and is sympathetic to the original design. In 2019, a new monument sign was installed at the northeast corner of the plaza, replacing a non-historic monument sign that stood in the same location. Other alterations to secondary resources on the plaza include replacement of bench seats and backing and replacement of the original fifteen flagpoles with sixteen new flagpoles in the same approximate location.

Interior alterations have been limited to mechanical and finish changes, as well as removal or abatement of hazardous materials. Mechanical and electrical components have been replaced or supplemented to accommodate system upgrades. These alterations, however, have not disrupted the original design or impacted interior spatial arrangements or finishes. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the City commenced a citywide asbestos abatement effort that resulted in the

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removal of asbestos insulation and other friable-asbestos-containing materials in the secondary spaces of Chrysler Hall. Vinyl asbestos tile (VAT), which was a commonly used floor finish throughout many of the Center's secondary spaces such as offices, meeting rooms, and dressing rooms, has also been replaced or covered with carpeting or other modern flooring in some areas. In recent years, the carpet covering the concrete floor of the side lobbies and theater of Chrysler Hall has been replaced due to wear. Because the original design calls for carpeting in these areas, these minor finish alterations do not compromise the overall integrity of design, materials, or workmanship of the site.

Despite these exterior and interior alterations to the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center, the overall design, materials, and workmanship that make up the district's character-defining features remain intact. From the soaring concrete buttresses and rhomboidal columns of SCOPE and Chrysler Hall to smaller details such as the light fixtures and integrated planters of the plaza, the complex's historic design remains exceptionally intact. The integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship evoke the historic feeling that conveys the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center's significance as a civic space with important associations with Norfolk's community planning and development, entertainment and recreation, and the performing arts, and as an excellent example of mid-twentieth century architectural design and engineering practices. Therefore, the property retains integrity of feeling and association.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1968-1972

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Nervi, Peri Luigi

Tazewell, Bradford (William and Tazewell & Associates)

Daniel Construction Company

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Entertainment/Recreation and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, at the statewide level of significance, as one of the best examples of a mid-twentieth century, superblock, domed arena and theater complex in Virginia. Designed by internationally renowned Italian architect, Pier Luigi Nervi, the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center has few, if any, counterparts elsewhere in Virginia. The Center's New Formalism, Neo-Expressionist, and Brutalist architectural styles are comparatively rare in Virginia, where the conservative Colonial Revival movement has been popular for well over a century. Nervi, with support from prominent local architectural firm Williams and Tazewell & Associates and the Daniels Construction Firm, utilized the latest design and engineering techniques to create a superblock of reinforced concrete and glass that made Norfolk and the Tidewater area a destination for a variety of high-profile entertainment and recreational events. The Center is also representative of the City of Norfolk's largescale urban renewal program that redeveloped vast swaths of downtown, reconfigured streetscapes, and constructed massive civic spaces as well as thousands of new housing units. The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center has a period of significance beginning in 1968, when the groundbreaking ceremony took place, to 1972, when the entire complex was completed.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion C: Architecture

The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the statewide level of significance for its association with internationally renowned master, Pier Luigi Nervi. Designed by Italian architect Pier Luigi Nervi, with support from prominent local firm Williams and Tazewell & Associates, and with the Daniels Construction Firm as general contractor, the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center utilized Modern Movement design and engineering techniques to create a superblock of reinforced concrete and glass. Featuring the bold New Formalism, Neo-Expressionism, and Brutalism architectural styles, the Center's distinctive design makes it a character-defining element of the redeveloped built environment created by Norfolk's urban renewal projects. The district serves as one of the best examples of a Modern Movement, mid-twentieth-century superblock composed of a domed arena, theater complex, plaza, parking garage, and convention hall in Virginia. Norfolk's SCOPE also is one of relatively few buildings in the United States designed by Nervi, colloquially known as the "Poet of Concrete," and the only example of his work in the state of Virginia.

Pier Luigi Nervi

In late 1965, the City of Norfolk commissioned Pier Luigi Nervi to design the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center. The Italian architect was famed internationally for his expertise in the

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use of reinforced concrete to create soaring flying buttresses, curving forms, and domed structures, but was also known for his practicality in regard to expense. Nervi, trained as a civil engineer in 1913 at the University of Bologna, Italy, was quoted stating “concrete is a living creature which can adapt itself to any form, any need, any stress.”² His reputation for the use of precast concrete was established early in his career with the design of the hangar at Orvieto, a city in Umbria, Italy, in 1935 for the Italian air force. Nervi utilized precast concrete components to create the curved intersecting ribs of the hangars.³ Nervi further developed the use of precast concrete to create domed geometric patterns with the reinvention of ferrocement, a thin layer of reinforced concrete poured over a thick mesh of wires. This technique was used on the Turin Exhibition Complex in the city of Turin, Italy, in 1948; the Palazzetto dello Sport in the city of Rome in 1960; the Leverone Field House and Thompson Arena at Dartmouth College in the town of Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1962; as well as for the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center in 1965-1971.⁴

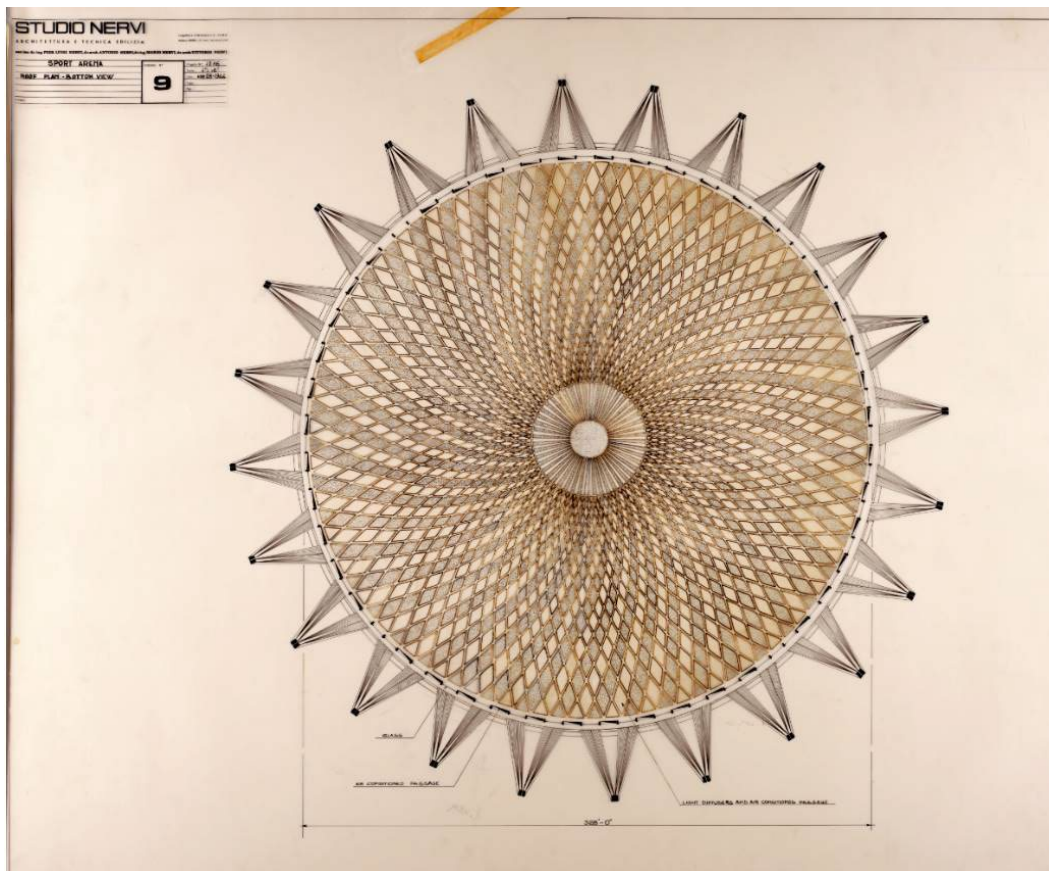


Figure 1: SCOPE Reflected Ceiling Plan, Pier Luigi Nervi, Studio Nervi, May 1966. Courtesy of Sergeant Memorial Collection, Norfolk Public Library.

² Paul Goldberger, “Pier Luigi Nervi, Architect, Dead at 87,” *The New York Times*, 10 January 1979.

³ Mario A. Chiorino, “Art and Science of Building in Concrete: The Work of Pier Luigi Nervi,” 2012, <https://www.scribd.com/doc/83898383/Art-and-Science-of-Building-in-Concrete-The-Work-of-Pier-Luigi-Nervi-by-Mario-Alberto-Chiorino>, (accessed 1 May 2018), 35.

⁴ Chiorino, “Art and Science of Building in Concrete: The Work of Pier Luigi Nervi,” 36.

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The City of Norfolk, much like other U.S. cities in the mid-twentieth century, sought to hire a renowned architect to create an “iconic building” that would generate significant attention and attract visitors from around the world.⁵ Lawrence Cox, Executive Director of the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NRHA), made the recommendation to hire Nervi, stating that “it was easy and logical to suggest the name of the man who is known the world over for his successful design work, particularly in this area...no one has had the success, acclamation and recognition that Pier Luigi Nervi has received...”⁶ Cox also highlighted Nervi’s reputation for designing buildings that could be quickly, efficiently, and economically constructed without compromising functionality or aesthetics. The Palazzetto dello Sport was cited as one of Nervi’s most popular works internationally and among his personal favorites. The arena, with its fluted ferrocement dome and soaring Y-shaped piers, is also one of the closest comparisons to his design for the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center, and likely served as inspiration for City officials who commissioned Nervi.⁷ Although some questioned the City’s decision to bring in an outside architect, Cox contended that Nervi’s international recognition would make Norfolk an architectural tourism destination.⁸

Williams and Tazewell & Associates

James Lee Williams, Jr. and Edmund Bradford Tazewell, Jr. formed their architectural firm in 1953-1955. Williams obtained his architectural education at the University of Virginia and gained experience with several well-known local firms, including Benjamin F. Mitchell; Rudolph, Cooke & Van Leeuwen; and Vernon F. Moore. Tazewell also studied architecture at the University of Virginia, as well as the University of Pennsylvania.⁹ He worked with the firm of Oliver & Smith for less than two years before partnering with Williams. During an interview, Tazewell offered an account of many of their commissions and history. Of the nearly 500 buildings he helped design, Tazewell estimated ninety-five percent were in the Norfolk area.¹⁰ While Tazewell cites SCOPE as his favorite project of his career, some of the firm’s other prominent works included the Virginia National Bank Headquarters (NRHP 2016), The Harrison Opera House, Old Dominion University’s Batten Arts & Letters Tower, and the Norfolk Southern Corporation building.¹¹ In addition to their collaboration with Nervi, Williams and Tazewell & Associates also served as the local architect on site for other renowned firms such as Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill (SOM), the lead designers for the Virginia National Bank building.

Unlike the experience with the Virginia National Bank Headquarters, which was constructed according to the SOM plans, the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center plans were

⁵ Witold Rybczynski, “Space: The Design of the Urban Environment,” p. 111.

⁶ “Nervi’s Proposal Stirs Imagination and Controversy,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, 6 June 1966.

⁷ Goldberger, “Pier Luigi Nervi, Architect, Dead at 87,” *The New York Times*, 10 January 1979.

⁸ “Nervi’s Proposal Stirs Imagination and Controversy,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, 6 June 1966.

⁹ John E. Wells and Robert E. Dalton, *The Virginia Architects: 1835-1955*, (Richmond, Virginia: New South Architectural Press, 1997), p.444, 481.

¹⁰ Philip Walzer, “Architect left his mark on many iconic Norfolk structure,” *The Virginian-Pilot*, July 25, 2011.

¹¹ Brad Tazewell, “Brad Tazewell Oral History Interview, June 25, 2019,” Interviewed by Ashlen Clark and Kayla Halberg, (Norfolk, VA: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2019).

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significantly altered by Tazewell. In an effort to balance practicality with design, Tazewell revised Nervi's original plans for the arena's interior seating plan from an asymmetrical arrangement with most seats constructed on one side to more traditional, symmetrical seating that lined the perimeter of the building. While the arena's exterior retained the overall design proposed by Nervi, the theater was ultimately entirely redesigned by Tazewell, who spent six months during 1966 traveling throughout the country and to Italy to study other cultural centers and arenas.¹² Rather than the more International Style design proposed by Nervi, Tazewell used New Formalism for the theater, which favored the Philharmonic Hall of the Lincoln Center in New York City.

Modern Movement

The Modern Movement emerged during the early twentieth century out of architectural experimentation among primarily European architects using new materials and technological developments to design buildings that rejected traditional design motifs and the historical tendency toward revivalist styles. Architects experimented with steel, glass, and concrete, as well as variations on volume and spatial arrangements, while eschewing decorative elements and classical idioms. Modernism also produced new ideas about urban planning and the relationship of single buildings to the overall built environment. In 1943 and in the midst of World War II, the Athens Charter, published by Le Corbusier following a meeting of the Congress Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM), established the basis for city planning for the majority of the twentieth century.¹³ Recommending that urban planning focus on the four functions of the city—residential, recreation, work, and transportation—the Athens Charter favored eliminating residential slums and creating planned recreational and open spaces, as well as venues for sports and other activities.¹⁴ In addition to informing urban planning policies such as urban renewal and revitalization programs of the mid-twentieth century, the Athens Charter also influenced architectural and urban design. Following national trends, the City of Norfolk and the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority demolished entire blocks to make way for major complexes of monumental architecture and open space.

The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center is also an exceptional local example of the mid-twentieth century design practice known as the superblock. As previously mentioned, the superblock concept attempted to reimagine the city, consolidating vast areas and multiple urban blocks into one large parcel. Buildings designed on superblocks were not oriented toward an adjacent street, but rather stood back on large pedestrian plazas, podiums, or greenspaces.¹⁵ The Center complex uses this design approach with SCOPE and Chrysler Hall raised above the street level on a large podium and oriented toward plaza features, such as the large rectangular fountain

¹² "Revision of Coliseum Plans for 12,500 Seats Likely," *The Ledger-Star*, 5 August 1966; "Happiness: Sharp Pencil and Coliseum Plans," *Ledger-Star*, 16 December 1967.

¹³ Virginia Department of Historic Resources, "International Style (1932-1960)," *New Dominion Virginia, Architectural Style Guide*, <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/NewDominion/NewDomStylGdeApril2014Version.pdf>, (accessed 2 May 2018), 9.

¹⁴ Congress Internationaux d'Architecture moderne (CIAM), *La Charte d'Athenes or The Athens Charter, 1933*, Translated by Trans J.Tyrwhitt, (Paris, France: The Library of the Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, 1946).

¹⁵ Witold Rybczynski, "Space: The Design of the Urban Environment," 109-110.

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in the southwest corner. The raised podium also allows for the underground parking garage, below-grade exhibition space in the arena, and lower-level service spaces in the theater, such as the orchestra pit, dressing rooms, and the smaller auxiliary theater.

Neo Expressionism

Pier Luigi Nervi's designs for the arena building illustrate the characteristic architectural features of Nervi's other works: soaring concrete flying buttresses and the use of ferrocement. Additionally, for the arena, he deployed the mid-twentieth century Neo Expressionist architectural style. Neo Expressionism treats architecture as sculpture through curved or angled concrete masses while avoiding the use of right angles and rectangles. SCOPE's curved piers and circular shape give this monumental architectural form its sculptural quality. Neo Expressionist architecture is also often used for the design of public or religious buildings, for which the monumentality and sculptural quality physically represent abstract concepts of meaning and purpose. Although several contemporary public buildings in Virginia, including the Hampton Coliseum and Dulles International Airport, were constructed in the Neo Expressionist style, the style is still relatively rare throughout Virginia and the Tidewater.¹⁶ Another contemporary, The Dome in Virginia Beach was also a Neo Expressionist, geodesic coliseum; constructed in 1957, The Dome was demolished in 1994.

New Formalism

While Nervi's plans for the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center arena conveyed the defining features of Neo Expressionism, Tazewell's theater design is characteristic of the New Formalist architectural style that first became popular during the 1960s. New Formalism draws on elements of classical architecture, including symmetry, columns, entablatures, building proportion, scaling, and colonnades, all of which are features present in Chrysler Hall. Typically used for smaller-scale public and commercial buildings, the classical derivations of New Formalist architecture create a sense of monumentality and significance, while the use of modern materials such as concrete ground the style firmly within the Modern Movement.¹⁷ Chrysler Hall's temple-like presence atop the large podium is one of the finest examples of New Formalism in the Tidewater region of Virginia. In Norfolk, examples of mid-twentieth century New Formalism can be found in the Granby Street Suburban Institutional Corridor (122-6154) such as Temple Israel (122-6154-0007), and in the Downtown Norfolk Financial District (122-6003) such as the Bank of Virginia (122-6003-0001). While these examples feature elements of New Formalism, Chrysler Hall is closer to academic approach to the style.

Brutalist Influence

Although SCOPE and Chrysler Hall are characteristic examples of Neo Expressionist and New Formalist architecture, both also exhibit influences from the Brutalist style popular in the United

¹⁶ Virginia Department of Historic Resources, "Neo Expressionism (1955- Present)," *New Dominion Virginia, Architectural Style Guide*, <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/NewDominion/NewDomStylGdeApril2014Version.pdf>, (accessed 30 May 2018), 47.

¹⁷ Virginia Department of Historic Resources, "New Formalist, (1960-Present)," *New Dominion Virginia, Architectural Style Guide*, <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/NewDominion/NewDomStylGdeApril2014Version.pdf>, (accessed 30 May 2018), 50.

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States from the 1950s through the 1970s. SCOPE demonstrates Brutalism's emphasis on mass and solidarity, load-bearing walls, and rough concrete surfaces. Concrete rhomboidal columns and concrete framing display Chrysler Hall's Brutalist influences. The travertine panels and glass curtain walls along the sides of the building balance the monumentality of the theater's otherwise Brutalist materials. The Brutalist elements of the Center are similar to those of its contemporary the Berglund Center in Roanoke, which is discussed in more detail in the comparative analysis below.



Figure 2: 1974 Aerial Photograph of Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center, facing west. SCOPE is on the right side of the Plaza, and Chrysler Hall is on the left. Courtesy of Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

Comparative Analysis

While the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center is of statewide significance for its association with internationally renowned architect Pier Luigi Nervi, the complex is also unmatched in many of its modernist qualities among similar contemporary facilities. Several of its contemporary arenas such as The Dome in Virginia Beach, the Hampton Coliseum, and the Richmond Coliseum were modernist in design and expression but were singular venues. Though each emphasized the domed, circular shape of the arena structure in a different way, the soaring buttresses and combination of glass and concrete are unique to the SCOPE arena and set it apart

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within Virginia. The Berglund Center in Roanoke is perhaps the most similar to the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center as it is also a two-venue complex with a shared plaza with multiple interconnected structures and below ground spaces. The Berglund Center is also composed of a concrete exterior and blends aspects of Brutalism with New Formalism and the International Style. The interior of the Berglund Center theater also has a striking resemblance to the main theater of Chrysler Hall with their floating concrete balconies. The Berglund Center, however, does not have the domed arena that characterizes SCOPE and other contemporary arenas in Virginia. The two venues epitomize modernist design aesthetics and ideals and would likely both be eligible for listing at the statewide level of significance. The Berglund Center also has similar connections to larger community planning and development programs such as urban renewal that impacted and displaced former communities (discussed in more detail in the following section).

Criterion A: Community Planning and Development

The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center is significant at the statewide level under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for its association with urban renewal and redevelopment programs carried out by the City of Norfolk and the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority beginning in the mid-twentieth century. The Center resulted in the redevelopment of several city blocks into a superblock near downtown Norfolk and was the product of creative funding strategies made possible through Federal urban renewal programs. The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center provides a lens through which to understand the socioeconomic impacts of urban renewal on displaced communities in Norfolk.

In 1949, President Harry S. Truman signed the Federal Housing Act, which provided for the first time a mechanism for local public agencies to leverage federal dollars for the redevelopment of dilapidated, privately owned housing and impoverished neighborhoods. The Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NRHA), established by the City of Norfolk in 1946, was among the first municipalities in the country to apply for and receive urban renewal funding made available by the Housing Act of 1949. During the early 1950s, Norfolk initiated the first large-scale, federally funded redevelopment project in the United States, known as “Project No. 1,” which was cited as having some of the most ramshackle housing in the country.¹⁸ Representative of the nation’s anticipation regarding this new funding mechanism, the *Architectural Forum* described Norfolk’s plans for redevelopment of area “No. 1” in a feature-length article of its May 1950 issue. The article argued that Norfolk’s urban renewal program would become an example nationwide for executing the redevelopment provisions of the 1949 Housing Act.¹⁹

¹⁸*Architectural Forum*, May 1950, 132.

¹⁹ *Architectural Forum* May 1950, 132.

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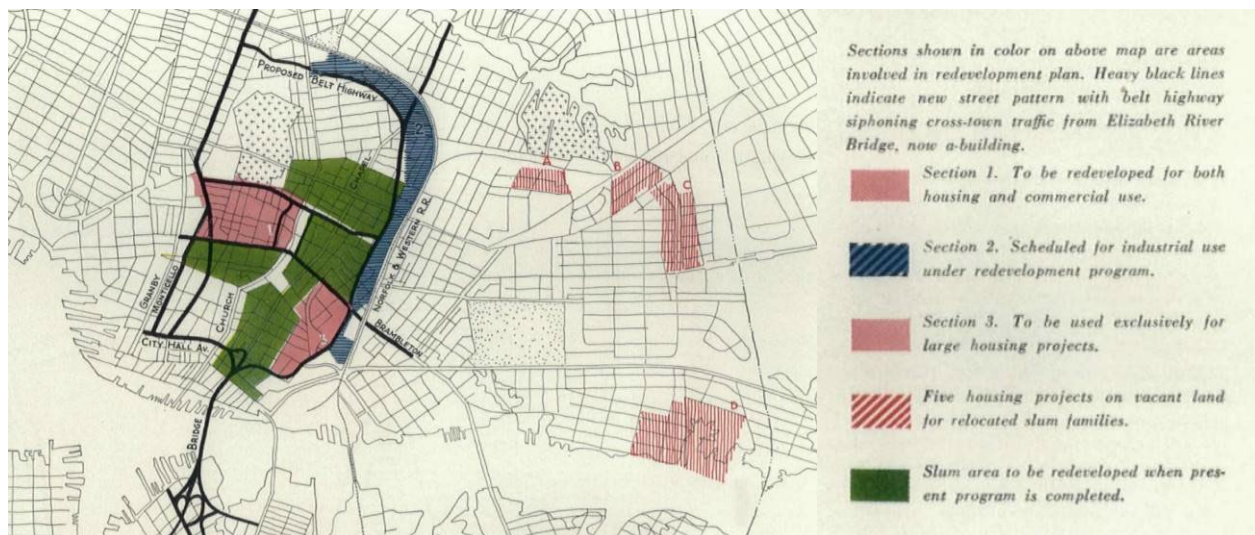


Figure 3: Map of Norfolk Redevelopment Plan, Architectural Forum, May 1950

At the time of award, Norfolk's plans for redevelopment were considered the "biggest ever," with more than 200 acres slated for demolition.²⁰ Located just north and east of downtown Norfolk, Project No. 1 resulted in the razing of approximately 2,800 residential units. This widespread demolition project displaced nearly 3,000 families and 800 single individuals, ninety-nine percent of whom were persons of color. Only 752 new units, all of which were racially segregated, were constructed inside the Project No. 1 area. Instead, much of the cleared area was repurposed for commercial, industrial, or civic purposes, while the majority of new housing units were constructed just outside the boundary of Project No. 1. Most of the families displaced by this initial clearance project were relocated to units constructed on vacant land near the eastern edge of the city.²¹ By the late 1950s, the NRHA had identified several additional redevelopment areas throughout Norfolk, including Downtown Redevelopment Area—North (R-8), where the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center was later constructed. During the mid-twentieth century approximately 800 residential and commercial buildings were demolished in the R-8 Redevelopment Area for the construction of large-scale civic centers, municipal complexes, shopping centers, hotels, office buildings, and parking structures.²²

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed a Housing and Urban Development Act that greatly expanded federal housing and redevelopment programs. Included in a portfolio of

²⁰ *Architectural Forum*, May 1950, 132.

²¹ Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *History of NRHA*, <http://www.nrha.us/about/history>, (accessed 26 April 2018); Brent Cebul, Robert K. Nelson, Justin Madron, and Nathaniel Ayers, *Renewing Inequality: Family Displacements through Urban Renewal, 1950-1966*, University of Richmond Digital Scholarship Lab, <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/renewal/#view=0/0/1&viz=cartogram> (accessed 25 January 2019). *Architectural Forum* May 1950, 135. Note: An additional 928 units were constructed in the vicinity of the Project No. 1 area by 1957, for a total of 1,674 units. These developments include Young Terrace (opened 1953, 746 units inside Project No. 1 area), Tidewater Gardens (opened 1955, 618 units), and Calvert Square (opened 1957, 310 units).

²² Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *History of NRHA*, <http://www.nrha.us/about/history>, (accessed 26 April 2018).

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domestic programs packaged as part of President Johnson's "Great Society" agenda, the Housing Act of 1965 was a significant legislative achievement authorizing approximately \$2.9 billion for urban renewal projects.²³ The 1965 Act's urban renewal program also included special provisions for grants-in-aid to specific units of local government for the construction of public infrastructure, schools, and community facilities. Among those special projects was a "cultural and convention center proposed to be built within Urban Renewal Project R-8 in Norfolk, Virginia."²⁴ The provision, an effort crafted by NRHA Executive Director Lawrence Cox and Virginia Senator A. Willis Robertson, allowed costs incurred by the City for the construction of the Cultural and Convention Center to serve as the necessary matching funds required for other eligible urban renewal activities.²⁵ The deal made the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center the "Jewel of Renewal," which became the "largest single construction project ever undertaken by the city;" its price tag of approximately \$28 million served as the cost share for at least eight other urban renewal projects in Norfolk.²⁶ At the federal level, Norfolk's Center became a pioneer project model for the Federal urban renewal program, and set a precedent for future programs and projects funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.²⁷

In order to meet the requirements of the funding structure, the City and NRHA had to carefully consider the location of the new cultural and convention center. While the seventeen-acre site located near the northeastern edge of downtown Norfolk offered an opportunity to enhance the vibrancy and vitality of the city center, provide accessibility and proximity to transportation and hotels, and take advantage of the relatively low cost of land, mostly importantly, the site was within the bounds of the NRHA's R-8 Redevelopment area. This location allowed NRHA to leverage additional federal urban renewal funds for other projects. In a 1970 report, Dr. Robert Burton of Old Dominion University expressed "there was no question about where this facility should be built, since location in the urban renewal area made possible two-thirds Federal Funding."²⁸ Locating the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center in the R-8 Area also helped the City achieve goals established in its Model City program. The NRHA maintained in its Model City application that the project would provide benefit to the Redevelopment Area by decentralizing the arts and cultural centers of the city and providing economic opportunity to low-income persons residing in the area.²⁹ Dr. Burton's report estimated "for every dollar spent by the City on Scope, an additional \$15.20 will be recirculated as income to the area."³⁰ Officials also asserted that the project would create approximately 500 local jobs and promised to support

²³ Alexander von Hoffman, "Let Us Continue: Housing Policy in the Great Society, Part One," (Cambridge: Joint Center for Housing Studies Harvard University, 2009), p. 13, http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/jchs.harvard.edu/files/w09-3_von_hoffman.pdf, (accessed 26 April 2018).

²⁴ *Housing Act of 1965*, <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-79/pdf/STATUTE-79-Pg451.pdf>.

²⁵ *1971-1975 Capital Improvements Plan*, City Planning Commission, Norfolk, Virginia

²⁶ "A Jewel of Renewal," *Inaugural Scope Souvenir Magazine*, 1971, page 7; *1971-1975 Capital Improvements Plan*, City Planning Commission, Norfolk, Virginia; Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, *History of NRHA*, <http://www.nrha.us/about/history>, (accessed 26 April 2018).

²⁷ "Coliseum Finance System May Become Nationwide," *Virginian Pilot*, 29 July 1966.

²⁸ Dr. Robert C. Burton, "The Scope Source Book: A Compilation of Existing Studies and Data," Center for Metropolitan Studies, Old Dominion University, created for the City of Norfolk, 1970.

²⁹ Application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development for a Grant to Plan a Comprehensive Model City Program for Norfolk, April 5, 1967, 307.3416 NOR; Comprehensive Model City, Volume II;

³⁰ Burton, "The Scope Source Book."

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local manufacturers and suppliers. Burton also anticipated an increase in hotel accommodations, restaurants, and shopping centers surrounding the complex, which he argued would generate increased property, sales, and accommodations tax revenue for the City and create additional economic opportunity for Norfolk's residents.³¹

Early in the project planning phases, the City placed emphasis on parking facilities to accommodate its new cultural and convention center. As early as 1957, developers and city officials recognized the need for adequate parking facilities in order to avoid the "pain-in-the-neck experience" of finding parking in the downtown area.³² The City hired nationally renowned parking consultant Ralph H. Burke Inc. of Chicago to develop parking plans to accompany the convention center complex. The City's initial goal was to provide parking for an at-capacity event within 1,500 feet of the venue, with approximately 600 underground parking spaces onsite.³³ The parking plans for Norfolk's Cultural and Convention Center topped all of its contemporaries, putting Norfolk "in a better position than either Richmond or Roanoke" with "more than 7,000 [parking spaces] within eight blocks of Scope [*sic*]."³⁴ In addition to providing adequate parking, traffic congestion was also a major concern for city planning officials. With twenty-two lanes of traffic immediately surrounding the Center, officials estimated that an at-capacity crowd could be dispersed from the site within 30 minutes. The city also made plans to incorporate "police traffic control," as well as "Norfolk's first computer-controlled traffic system," in order to "decrease dispersal time."³⁵ The City's emphasis on parking and traffic control illustrates the significance placed not only on the size and capacity of the center, but also its accessibility to users both from Norfolk and from out-of-town localities.

In addition to serving as an essential financial component of Norfolk's urban renewal program, the construction of the Cultural and Convention Center required extensive alterations to the built environment. The consolidation of large swaths of land in downtown Norfolk is an excellent example of the mid-twentieth century urban design practice known as the superblock. In an attempt to "remake the city in a new image," architects and city planners used superblocks to shift the orientation of buildings away from adjacent streets and transform the way people navigated from one building to another via raised plazas or designed landscapes.³⁶ Norfolk not only constructed one of the largest recreational complexes of its kind in terms of scale and cost in the state of Virginia, but also made plans to connect the various "pedestrian plazas or squares" from "Waterfront Drive to Scope."³⁷ In his report to the City, Dr. Burton boasted that "Scope establishes a standard which will positively influence the direction and quality of future downtown development" and asserted that the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center would serve as a "dynamic force in the continued expansion and direction of the central city's

³¹ Burton, "The Scope Source Book."

³² "7-Point 'Revitalization' Plan Proposed for Downtown Area," *Virginian Pilot*, 6-23-1957

³³ Burton, "The Scope Source Book;" 1971-1975 *Capital Improvements Plan*, City Planning Commission, Norfolk, Virginia

³⁴ "Parking and Coliseums," *Virginian-Pilot*, 5 January 1971

³⁵ Burton, "The Scope Source Book;"

³⁶ Witold Rybczynski, "Space: The Design of the Urban Environment," in *Making Cities Work: Prospects and Policies for Urban America*, edited by Robert P. Inman, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 109-110.

³⁷ "Norfolk Planners Favor Altered Downtown Plan," *Virginian Pilot*, 26 June 1971.

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rebirth.”³⁸ While these plans to connect the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center to the rest of downtown were never fully realized, the Center represented trends in planning and urban development practices that swept the nation during the mid-twentieth century.

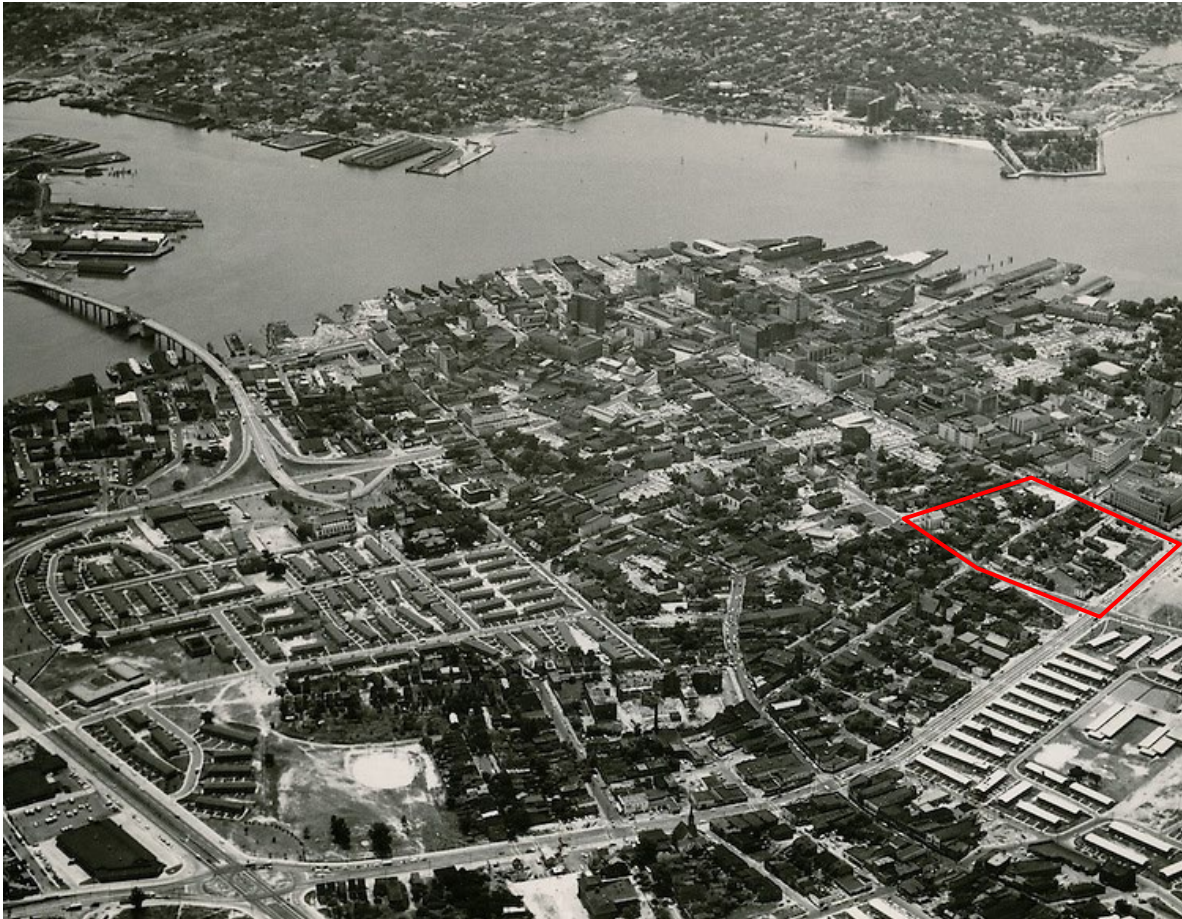


Figure 4: 1958 Aerial Photograph of Norfolk Facing South, courtesy of Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority. The area in red shows the future location of the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center.

³⁸ Burton, “The Scope Source Book;”

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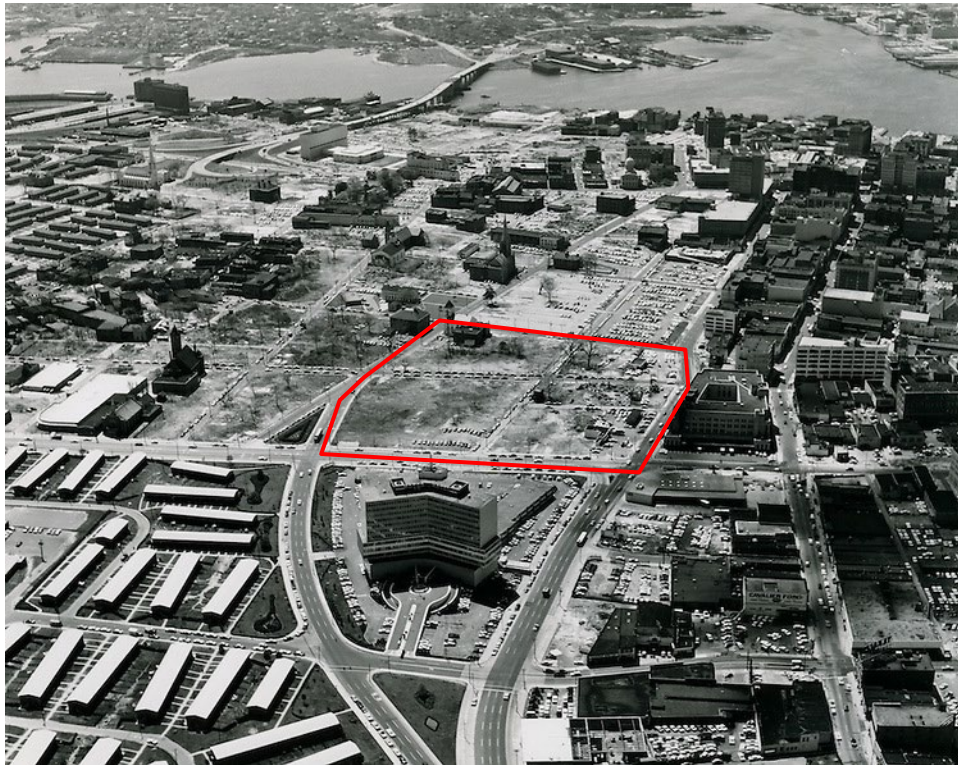


Figure 5: 1962 Aerial Photograph of Downtown Norfolk Facing South, courtesy of Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority. The area in red shows the future location of the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center.



Figure 6: 1990 Aerial Photograph of Downtown Norfolk facing South, courtesy of Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority. The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center is centrally located in the photograph.

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The large-scale redevelopment of Norfolk's downtown required, in many cases, wholesale demolition of entire city blocks. Like many urban renewal programs across the country, Norfolk's redevelopment projects gained a reputation for exacerbating racial and socioeconomic disparities through the displacement of African American communities. The site chosen for the Cultural and Convention Center was originally composed of seven city blocks, including the 200-400 blocks of E. Charlotte St., E. Bute St., and E. Brambleton Ave., the 200 block of E. York St., and the 500-600 blocks of Cumberland St., Bank St., Brewer St., and Monticello Ave. Sanborn maps dating to the 1950s illustrate that the area was largely composed of residential buildings with a few public buildings, churches, and schools scattered along the major arteries.³⁹ Census data from 1940 further reveals the vast majority of residents of this neighborhood were African Americans, and the schools and churches in the area primarily served African Americans. The entire Downtown Redevelopment North (R-8) project area originally consisted of 1,111 "sub-standard" dwelling units, the demographic makeup of which was ninety-seven percent African American or other persons of color. While these statistics are not unique among other urban renewal projects around the country, the size and scale of Norfolk's redevelopment program outmatched those of other comparable mid-sized cities.⁴⁰

Criterion A: Entertainment/Recreation

The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center is significant at the statewide level under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/Recreation. As the largest complex of its contemporaries in Virginia Beach (1957), Hampton (1969), Richmond (1971), and Roanoke (1971), Virginia, with a maximum capacity of 11,800 seats in the arena, 2,498 seats in the theater, and 95,000 square feet of exhibition space, the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center served as the premiere venue for sporting events, musical concerts, and conventions in the Tidewater region.⁴¹ The complex includes four event venue spaces including SCOPE (the arena), Chrysler Hall (the main theater), Little Hall (the small theater primarily used for rehearsals and minor performances), and the exhibition hall (underground convention space).⁴²

As a result of military expansion in Norfolk before and during World War II, the City of Norfolk constructed the Municipal Auditorium on Granby and E 9th Street (now the rear side of the Harrison Opera House). The building was completed ca. 1943 in the Streamlined Moderne style using a combination of City funds and Federal War Funds. Although the Municipal Auditorium was meant to provide a much-needed entertainment venue for the growing city, in the early 1950s, the City of Norfolk's Planning Commission expressed a need to expand its cultural center. The Planning Commission hoped to increase the cultural venue's capacity to 10,000 persons, from the 1,831-person theater and 3,618-person auditorium that their World War II-era

³⁹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, City of Norfolk, Virginia, 1928 (revised 1944).

⁴⁰ Brent Cebul, Robert K. Nelson, Justin Madron, and Nathaniel Ayers, *Renewing Inequality: Family Displacements through Urban Renewal, 1950-1966*, University of Richmond Digital Scholarship Lab, <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/renewal/#view=0/0/1&viz=cartogram> (accessed 25 January 2019).

⁴¹ Capacity of the contemporary cultural centers was

⁴² "Center to be '1st Class,'" *The Virginian-Pilot*, 21 May 1968; Burton, "The Scope Source Book."

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facilities accommodated.⁴³ By the mid-to-late 1960s, plans to replace Norfolk's "archaic theater and arena" were well underway with the purpose of attracting "a wider and more exciting range of entertainment."⁴⁴ The city made plans to televise performances and events held at the new arena in order to "establish the center's reputation as a first-class facility," while the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce predicted that Norfolk would become a national competitor for a variety of cultural and athletic events.⁴⁵

The Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center was designed to accommodate "an infinite range of staging requirements...suited for almost any type of public presentation" with the goal of providing what few other centers could: an auditorium and arena "under one roof."⁴⁶ Studio Nervi's original architectural plans and renderings, which include several different utilization plans for hockey, boxing, and conventions, illustrate the City's intention to create a center capable of hosting a variety of sporting events and recreational activities. Even the arena's name, SCOPE, gave a nod to the "kaleidoscope" of different attractions that the venue would host. The arena was home to several local college and professional sports teams including the Virginia Squires, the first professional basketball team in the Tidewater region, as well as the area's first professional hockey team, the Tidewater Wings.⁴⁷ During its first month, more than 200,000 people attended events at SCOPE. The first Virginia Squires game attracted a "near capacity crowd."⁴⁸ In addition to sporting events, SCOPE saw near- or at-capacity audiences for musical acts such as Elvis Presley, John Denver, Bob Dylan, the Eagles, and Marvin Gaye.⁴⁹ With the largest dome in the world at its time (a diameter of 443 feet), the possibilities and potential return on investment seemed endless for the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center.⁵⁰

The Center's theater building, Chrysler Hall, was named for Walter P. Chrysler, Jr., son of the automobile giant responsible for founding Chrysler Corporation. Chrysler was a preeminent art collector and philanthropist of his time, amassing "the largest and most important private collection of modern painting and sculpture in the United States."⁵¹ In the early 1970s, Chrysler moved his collection to his wife's hometown of Norfolk and became a local benefactor of the arts. Both Chrysler Hall and the Chrysler Museum of Art were named in his honor.⁵² Chrysler

⁴³ The City Planning Commission of Norfolk, VA, CULTURAL CENTER PLAN PLATE IV OF CITY PLAN, December 1951, p. 8.

⁴⁴ Dick Bayer, "1968: Blast-off Year for Modern City," *New Norfolk: Impetus, Areas Marked for Action in 1969*, Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, January 1969, Vol. VII, No. 1

⁴⁵ "Norfolk Reaches for Big Leagues in Cultural Center," *The Virginian-Pilot*, 19 May 1968; *New Norfolk*, Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, edited by June S. Morrisette, July 1971, Vol. IX, No. 6, p. 71.

⁴⁶ Burton, "The Scope Source Book;"

⁴⁷ Paula Lucas, "The Pros Choose Norfolk!," *New Norfolk*, Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, August 1970

⁴⁸ "Scope Earns City \$141,775," *The Virginian-Pilot*, 16 December 1971.

⁴⁹ "The Scoop on Scope," *Ledger-Star*, DATE?

⁵⁰ Mario A. Chiorino, "Art and Science of Building in Concrete: The Work of Pier Luigi Nervi," *Concrete International*, March 2012, 36.

⁵¹ Chrysler Museum of Art, "Walter Chrysler, Jr.," <https://chrysler.org/about/walter-chrysler-jr-s-story/> (accessed 5 December 2019).

⁵² Chrysler Museum of Art, "Walter Chrysler, Jr.," <https://chrysler.org/about/walter-chrysler-jr-s-story/> (accessed 5 December 2019); Brad Tazewell, "Brad Tazewell Oral History Interview, June 25, 2019," Interviewed by Ashlen Clark and Kayla Halberg, (Norfolk, VA: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2019).

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Hall was cited as one of the finest theaters in the region and served as a premiere venue for major Broadway performances including “Annie,” which attracted more than 30,000 people over a two-week period, as well as the Mitzi Gaynor Show, My Fair Lady, Grease, and West Side Story, among others.⁵³ In the Center’s inaugural magazine, Chrysler Hall was cited as an “all-too-rare gem,” that when combined with the “human element” of the performing arts, was expected to “place Norfolk prominently on the cultural map of the East Coast.”⁵⁴

The City of Norfolk anticipated that the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center would produce significant intangible benefits for the community, in addition to the potential financial return on investment. City officials promised the new facilities would provide meaningful recreational and entertainment activities for the citizens of Norfolk, significantly increasing “the quality of cultural and professional life in the city and Tidewater.”⁵⁵ The local architects, Williams and Tazewell & Associates, compared the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center to historical gathering places such as ancient Greek and Roman forums, medieval squares, and early American markets where people assembled to exchange goods and partake in cultural activities. To them, the center was “today’s answer to man’s need for a gathering place...For coming together and sharing the same field of experience.”⁵⁶ From the architect’s perspective, Norfolk’s Cultural and Convention Center was intended to be a place for cultural exchange and community building, in addition to pure recreation and entertainment.

⁵³ “A Building of Striking Architecture and Memorable Events,” *The Virginia-Pilot* and *The Ledger-Star*, 8 November 1981.

⁵⁴ “Culture is Scope’s First Name,” SCOPE Inaugural Souvenir Magazine, 92.

⁵⁵ Burton, “The Scope Source Book;”

⁵⁶ The Williams and Tazewell Partnership, AIA, “Manspace: An Explanation of Public Spaces and their Function in Urban Environment,” pamphlet from the collection of Bill Miner.

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Figure 7: A crowd gathered to watch a band performance on Plaza of Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center. Photo undated. Courtesy of the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

SCOPE's Legacy

Prior to its opening, City officials and consultants foresaw great economic and intrinsic benefits of the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center for the city. While the Center brought lucrative acts and events to Norfolk, reports in the first ten years of operation showed significant deficits in the overall operating budget, reaching nearly \$600,000 in 1979. SCOPE and Chrysler Hall faced competition in securing major concerts and conventions due to the close proximity of the Hampton Coliseum, The Dome in Virginia Beach, and the Virginia Beach Pavilion during the late 1970s. The deficit was attributed largely to the high cost of Norfolk's facilities and the overall deflated economy. Major musical acts preferred to rent smaller venues where they could sell out, rather than see many empty seats in the audience.⁵⁷ The City was also dealt several fiscal blows in the Center's early years including the generation of fraudulent tickets by Center employees as well as a shocking and financially devastating money laundering scandal that resulted in the resignation of the Center's first director, Denzil E. Skinner, following an unexplained revenue deficit of \$42,000 in 1972.⁵⁸

Although the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center struggled to meet its financial goals, the building's architectural and urban planning legacy has maintained its significance well into the

⁵⁷ "Scope Singing Rock 'n' Roll Blues," *Ledger-Star*, 12 November 1981.

⁵⁸ "Accountants Could be Right: Skinner," *Virginian-Pilot*, 28 December 1972; "Auditor Debate Revived by Scandal: Scope Fraud is Said to Show Need for Change," *Virginian-Pilot*, 8 October 1979.

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twenty-first century. In an article published in the *Virginian-Pilot* in 2003 titled, “Scope: Endures the ‘Test of Time,’” local architects and engineers continued to praise the building as a “beautiful marrying of art and engineering” that still “makes a strong statement for the city.”⁵⁹ In a 2019 interview, architect Brad Tazewell remembered “SCOPE” and the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center as his favorite and one of the most defining projects of his career.⁶⁰ The complex maintains a prominent location at the northwestern edge of downtown Norfolk. The size, scale, location, and architectural character continue to serve as a visual landmark for visitors and residents alike as they enter the city.

The legacy of the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center also has significant ties to the lasting impacts of urban renewal. In 1950, Charles L. Kaufman, Chairman of the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, predicted the significant results that its urban renewal program would have, stating “The future of Norfolk for the rest of its history will be fixed by the extent to which this program is followed during the next few years.”⁶¹ Norfolk not only had the largest urban renewal program in the state of Virginia, but also matched, and in some cases exceeded, those of other mid-sized cities throughout the country. The NRHA’s Project No. 1 was, by far, the largest single redevelopment project among comparably sized cities, and even rivaled projects in much larger cities throughout the country. The transformation of the city’s built environment was unprecedented and has affected the ways its residents and visitors have interacted with that environment and one another for decades.

Kaufman’s statement also resonates with the significant socioeconomic consequences of the city’s urban renewal program. While NRHA, the City, and their counterparts around the country presented what they considered positive social impacts of redevelopment, historians have noted the lasting adverse impacts of urban renewal on individuals due to mass displacement as well as the disintegration of communities caused by “collapsed social networks, dispossession, and economic and political disenfranchisement.”⁶² By the late 1960s, more than 5,000 families in Norfolk, eighty-five percent of whom were African American or other persons of color, had been displaced by urban renewal, while only a few more than 2,000 residential units had been made available for their relocation. In the Downtown-North (R-8) area specifically, only 441 families are accounted for in HUD’s annual reports, while 1,111 units were demolished. Although the records do not explicitly explain the data gap, historians have concluded that hundreds of single individuals remain unaccounted for, as they were ineligible for public housing or relocation assistance.⁶³ The impact that urban renewal had on individuals and their communities can still be felt among Norfolk residents. Some residents remember the hope of “a cleaner, newer, safer

⁵⁹ “Scope: Endures the ‘Test of Time,” *Virginian-Pilot*, 5 November 2003.

⁶⁰ Brad Tazewell, “Brad Tazewell Oral History Interview, June 25, 2019,” Interviewed by Ashlen Clark and Kayla Halberg, (Norfolk, VA: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2019).

⁶¹ *Architectural Forum*, May 1950, 133.

⁶² Brent Cebul, Robert K. Nelson, Justin Madron, and Nathaniel Ayers, *Renewing Inequality: Family Displacements through Urban Renewal, 1950-1966*, University of Richmond Digital Scholarship Lab, <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/renewal/#view=0/0/1&viz=cartogram> (accessed 25 January 2019). See also: Mindy Thompson Fullilove, *Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, and What We Can Do About It*, (New York: Random House, 2004).

⁶³ Cebul, et. al., *Renewing Inequality*.

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environment” with “green grass, playground[s], [and] sidewalks running everywhere” that was instilled in many.⁶⁴ While some admit that developments like Moton Park “worked for so many years,” others also recognize the “distrust and discontent” that developed among displaced residents regarding redevelopment.⁶⁵ For most, their “community within the community,” sometimes shaped by and other times dismantled by urban renewal, defined individual experiences.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Gore, Charles. “Charles Gore Oral History Interview: Church Street, August 6, 2019.” Interviewed by Ashlen Clark and Kayla Halberg. Norfolk, VA: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2019.

⁶⁵ Gore, Charles. “Charles Gore Oral History Interview: Church Street, August 6, 2019.” Interviewed by Ashlen Clark and Kayla Halberg. Norfolk, VA: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2019; Dolgia, Barbara. “Barbara Dolgia Oral History Interview, July 11, 2019.” Interviewed by Ashlen Clark. Norfolk, VA: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2019.

⁶⁶Dolja, Barbara. “Barbara Dolgia Oral History Interview, July 11, 2019.” Interviewed by Ashlen Clark. Norfolk, VA: Commonwealth Preservation Group, 2019. Commonwealth Preservation Group (CPG) undertook an Oral History Project during the Summer 2019 with focuses on urban renewal and Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center. CPG staff interviewed architects, developers, city planners, and residents. These statements are based on the conclusions of this Oral History Project, as well as other secondary and primary source material. A full list of the oral history interviews associated with these contexts is included in Section 9 Bibliographical References. Full transcripts of these interviews are held in CPG’s archives.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources; City of Norfolk

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR ID 122-5968

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 10.7

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center
Name of Property

City of Norfolk, Virginia
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Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 36.85403 Longitude: -76.28742

2. Latitude: 36.85380 Longitude: -76.28564

3. Latitude: 38.85154 Longitude: -76.28549

4. Latitude: 38.85232 Longitude: -76.28813

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center includes parcel 1437074535 as recorded by the City of Norfolk, Virginia, and as noted in the City's real estate assessor's records. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the attached location and sketch maps.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The selected boundary for the Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center is the current legal parcel boundary associated with the property. The boundary is also historically associated with the nominated property throughout the district's period of significance. The property's historic setting and all known associated historic resources have been included within the nominated area's boundary.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kayla Boyer Halberg
organization: Commonwealth Preservation Group
street & number: 536 W 35th Street
city or town: Norfolk state: VA zip code: 23508
e-mail: admin@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com
telephone: 757-923-1900
date: December 9, 2019; Updated and revised June 2025

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center
City or Vicinity: Norfolk
County: N/a State: Virginia
Photographer: Kayla Halberg / Celina Adams & Kynzie Johnson
Date Photographed: 5.15.2018 / 6.11.2025

**Note: Photographs from 2018 have been confirmed and remain an accurate reflection of 2025 conditions, but offer a better view of the resource due to obstructions or lighting.*

Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center
Name of Property

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo Number of 30	Description	Camera Direction	Date	Photographer
1	Monticello Ave Plaza Entry	East	06/2025	CA & KJ
2	Plaza Fountain and SCOPE	NW	05/2018	KH
3	SCOPE South Gate Entrance	North	06/2025	CA & KJ
4	Soaring Buttress Detail	West	05/2018	KH
5	Chrysler Hall Façade (West Elevation)	East	05/2018	KH
6	Chrysler Hall South Elevation	North	05/2018	KH
7	Chrysler Hall East Elevation	NW	06/2025	CA & KJ
8	Plaza and Chrysler Hall North Elevation	South	06/2025	CA & KJ
9	Plaza Fountain	West	06/2025	CA & KJ
10	Exhibition Entry Canopy	East	06/2025	CA & KJ
11	Exhibition Entry Canopy Detail	NE	06/2025	CA & KJ
12	Northeast corner of Plaza showing Monument Sign	NE	06/2025	CA & KJ
13	Parking Garage Entrance Ramp	West	06/2025	CA & KJ
14	Sunken Garden	East	05/2018	KH
15	SCOPE South Gate Lower Concourse Entrance	South	06/2025	CA & KJ
16	SCOPE Lower concourse main office	North	06/2025	CA & KJ
17	SCOPE Lower concourse typical hallway	East	06/2025	CA & KJ
18	SCOPE Upper concourse typical hallway	East	06/2025	CA & KJ
19	SCOPE Typical Arena Entrance	West	06/2025	CA & KJ
20	SCOPE Arena Interior	East	06/2025	CA & KJ
21	SCOPE Arena Ceiling		06/2025	CA & KJ
22	SCOPE Restaurant Interior	East	06/2025	CA & KJ
23	Typical Conference Room	South	06/2025	CA & KJ
24	Exhibition Hall Entrance	East	06/2025	CA & KJ
25	Exhibition Hall Interior Entrance Lobby	NE	05/2018	KH
26	Exhibition Hall Interior	East	06/2025	CA & KJ
27	Parking Garage	SW	06/2025	CA & KJ
28	Chrysler Hall Theater Interior	West	05/2018	KH
29	Chrysler Hall Theater Interior-Stage View	East	06/2025	CA & KJ
30	Chrysler Hall Theater seating detail	North	05/2018	KH
31	Chrysler Hall Entrance Lobby	East	05/2018	KH
32	Chrysler Hall Main Stair (North side)	North	05/2018	KH

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33	Chrysler Hall Grand Hall	South	06/2025	CA & KJ
34	Chrysler Hall Dress Circle Level Exterior Balcony	SW	06/2025	CA & KJ
35	Chrysler Hall Typical Hallway	East	06/2025	CA & KJ
36	Chrysler Hall Typical Hallway and Stair	West	06/2025	CA & KJ
37	Chrysler Hall Stair Detail	East	05/2018	KH
38	Chrysler Hall Typical Dressing Room	SW	06/2025	CA & KJ

Historic Images Log

Figure No.	Caption
1	SCOPE Reflected Ceiling Plan, Pier Luigi Nervi, Studio Nervi, May 1966. Courtesy of Sergeant Memorial Collection, Norfolk Public Library.
2	1974 Aerial Photograph of Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center, facing west. SCOPE is on the right side of the Plaza, and Chrysler Hall is on the left. Courtesy of Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority.
3	Map of Norfolk Redevelopment Plan, <i>Architectural Forum</i> , May 1950
4	1958 Aerial Photograph of Norfolk Facing South, courtesy of Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority. Area in red shows future location of Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center.
5	1962 Aerial Photograph of Downtown Norfolk Facing South, courtesy of Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority. Area in red shows future location of Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center.
6	1990 Aerial Photograph of Downtown Norfolk facing South, courtesy of Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority. Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center centrally located in photograph.
7	Crowd gathered to watch band performance on Plaza of Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center. Photo undated. Courtesy of Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
Tier 2 – 120 hours
Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

Legend

Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center
(SCOPE and Chrysler Hall)
Norfolk, VA
DHR ID 122-5968

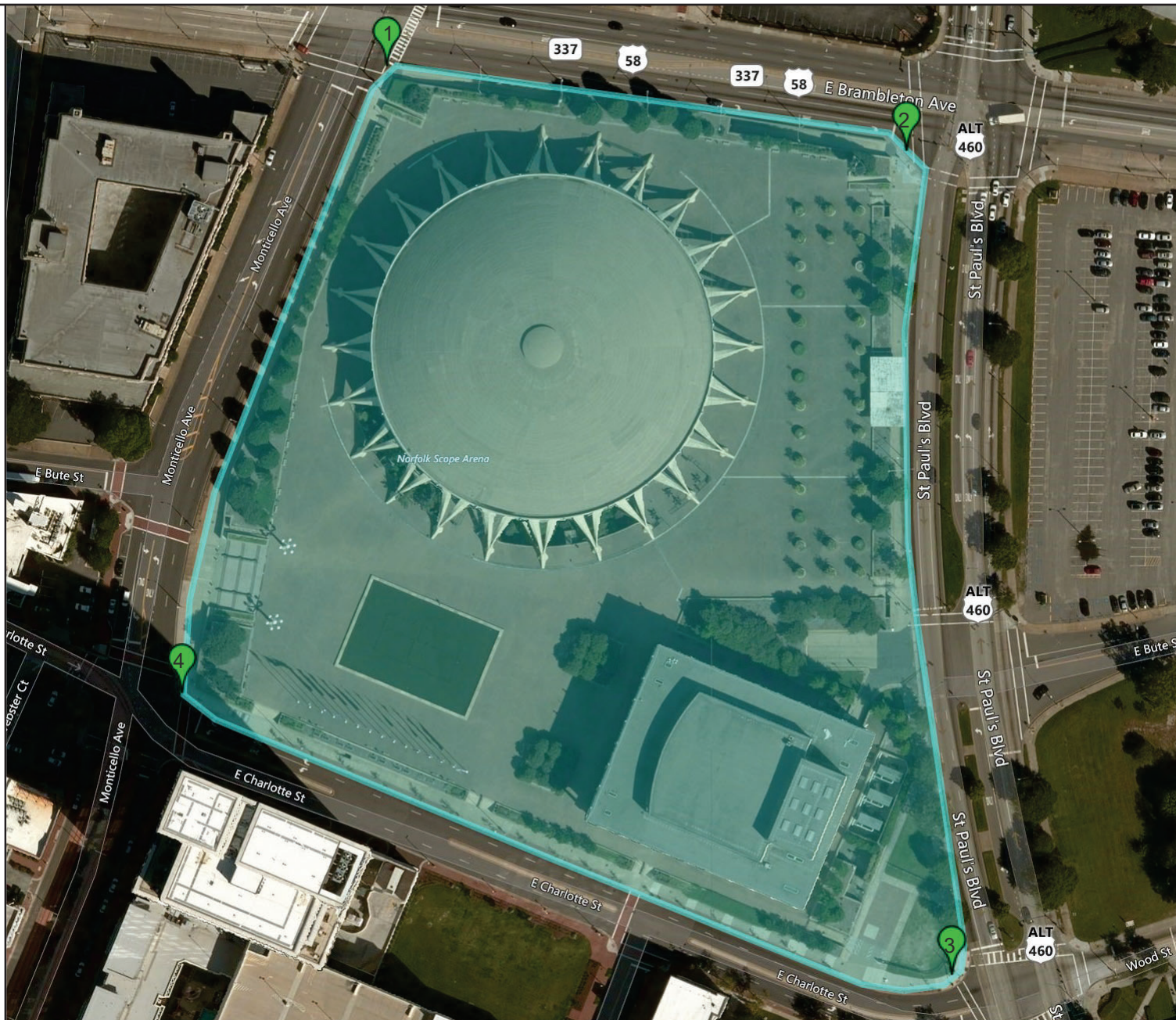
Location Map Coordinates:

- 1: Lat: 36.85403 Lon: -76.28742
2: Lat: 36.85380 Lon: -76.28564
3: Lat: 36.85154 Lon: -76.28549
4: Lat: 36.85232 Lon: -76.28813



Feet

0 50 100 150 200
1:2,257 / 1"=188 Feet



Title: Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center, Norfolk, VA, Location Map **Date:** 6/5/2025

DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.

Legend

Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center
(SCOPE and Chrysler Hall)
201 E. Brambleton Avenue
Norfolk, VA
DHR ID 122-5968

Sketch Map Key

Contributing Primary Resources:

- 1-SCOPE (arena)
- 2-Chrysler Hall (theater)
- 3-Plaza
- 4-Parking Garage (entrance marked,
garage below ground)

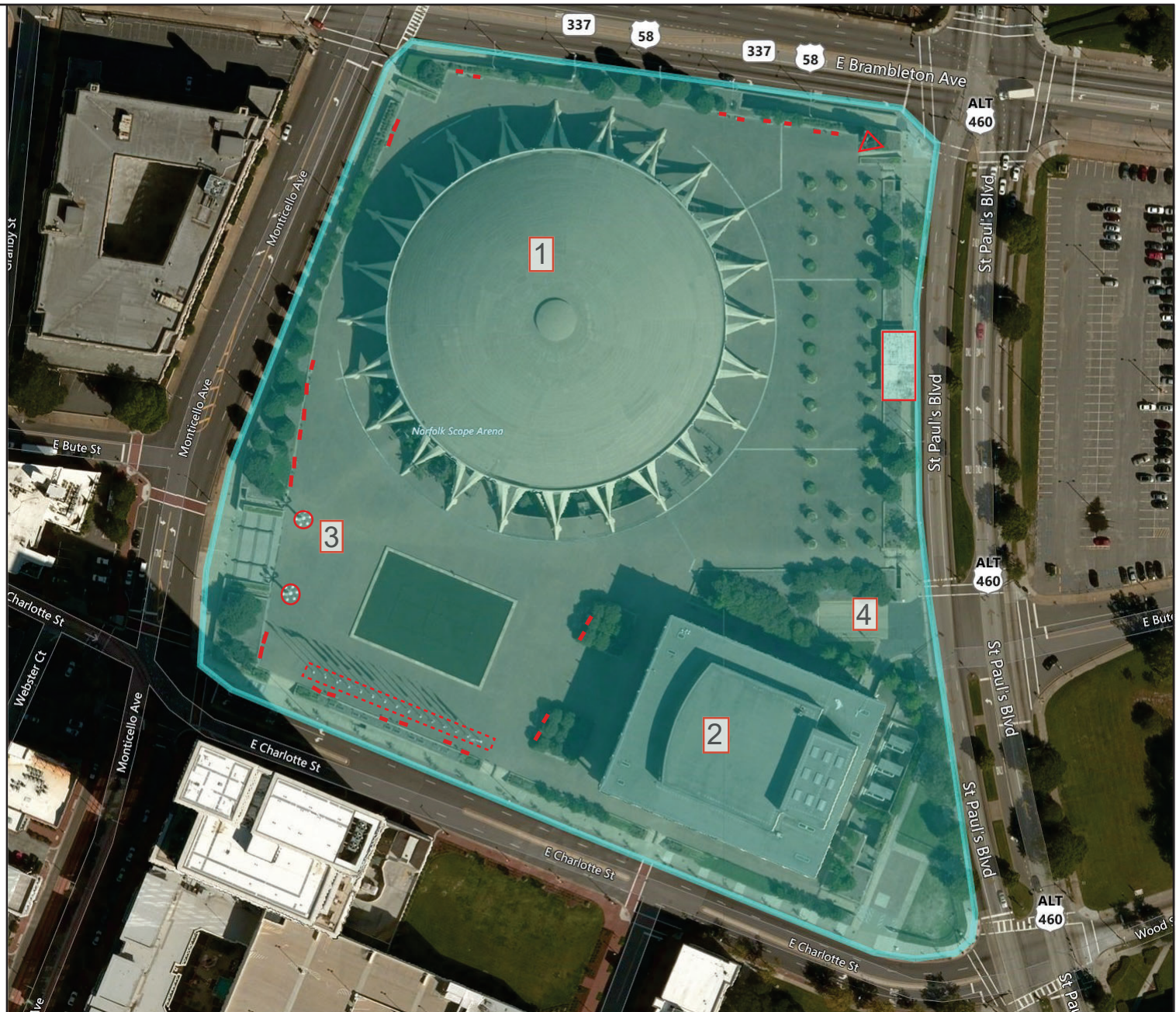
Secondary Resources of the Plaza/Podium:

- Plaza/Podium Benches (28, NC)
- Exhibition Hall Entry Canopy (C)
- Plaza/Podium Light Fixtures (C)
- Flagpoles (16, NC)
- △ Monument Sign (NC)



Feet

0 50 100 150 200
1:2,257 / 1"=188 Feet



Title: Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center, Norfolk, VA, Sketch Map

Date: 6/5/2025

DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.

Norfolk Cultural and Convention Center

DHR ID 122-5968
Photo Key

Legend



Google Earth

© 2018 Google

500 ft

