

Honorable _____

As a fellow citizen and taxpayer, surely you appreciate the notion that governments exist to serve their citizens. Citizens have the right to understand how their government operates and if their tax dollars are being spent efficiently and effectively. Governments have a responsibility to provide that information in an easily understandable way. Unfortunately, government financial statements are often too large and complicated for average citizens without a college degree in finance, economics or accounting.

As the thought leader in advancing government accountability, the 14,000-member Association of Government Accountants (AGA) challenges Norfolk to join its counterparts nationwide by producing and publishing a four-page "Citizen Centric Report." Imagine providing an annual "state of the government" report that doesn't require much effort to prepare yet provides understandable information to citizens about the financial condition and performance of the government. This report could be posted in the local newspaper and on the City's website, which would provide easy access to the public. Imagine the increase in citizen satisfaction gained from equipping them with a resource that answers the question, "Are we better off today than we were last year?"

Our proposed "citizen centric" report template lays out what should be included on each of the four pages. As an example, we've included a draft report, which features Virginia Beach, and would be thrilled if you would encourage Norfolk to produce and publish its own report. We are available if assistance is needed (insert e-mail address). On behalf of AGA's Virginia Peninsula Chapter, thank you for your help in advancing government accountability.

Respectfully,

Cecelia Smith, President
AGA Virginia Peninsula Chapter