

SECTION 1 — A PERSONAL LETTER TO NEWPORT NEWS

Why I'm Running

To the People of Newport News,

I know I am not the conventional candidate for mayor.

I didn't spend my life preparing for political office. I built businesses, worked in entertainment, created music, developed ideas, raised a family, experienced successes and setbacks, and lived through many of the same economic realities facing everyday people. My road has taken me from Newport News to different parts of the country and through very different rooms—from neighborhoods and nightlife to studios, corporate offices, business meetings and formal events.

And eventually, that road brought me back here.

Newport News is deeply connected to my story. I spent part of my childhood at Fort Eustis and returned to this city as a teenager. I began building YD Entertainment here while I was still young. Some of my earliest entrepreneurial ambitions were formed here. I've left, traveled, worked in other cities, experienced other cultures and seen different approaches to development—and those experiences changed the way I look at Newport News.

I don't look at our city and see a place without potential.

I see a city whose pieces haven't been fully connected yet.

We build some of the most sophisticated ships in the world. We have waterfront, higher education, major employers, military infrastructure, established neighborhoods, talented young people, entrepreneurs, artists, tradespeople, restaurants and families from countless backgrounds.

Yet too many people still feel like they have to leave Newport News to find certain opportunities, experiences or environments.

Too many young people wonder what there is for them to do.

Too many families are watching housing, food, electricity and everyday expenses consume more of their income.

Too many entrepreneurs have ideas but lack the capital, property or opportunity to turn them into businesses.

And too many conversations about public safety begin only **after** something has already gone wrong.

That is why I am running.

I believe we can think bigger about what a city government is supposed to accomplish.

At the end of an elected official's term, I don't only want to ask how many programs were created, how many meetings were held or how much money was spent.

I want to ask:

Are the people better off?

Is it easier to build a life here?

Are there more opportunities?

Are our neighborhoods safer?

Are our young people excited about their futures?

Are local businesses growing?

Are families healthier?

Are residents keeping more of what they earn?

Are there more reasons to visit Newport News—and more reasons for our own people to stay?

Those questions became the foundation for **Newport News Opportunity Worldwide — NNOW**.

NNOW is built around four interconnected pillars:

PEOPLE. PLACES. PROGRESS. PROSPERITY.

Invest in our **people**.

Create better **places** to live, work, gather and experience.

Embrace **progress** through technology, manufacturing, sustainability and new ideas.

Turn that progress into shared **prosperity** that reaches neighborhoods throughout Newport News.

I also believe we have to attack problems at their roots.

When we talk about crime, policing is part of the conversation—but it cannot be the entire conversation. Poverty, hopelessness, instability, lack of opportunity, addiction, broken community relationships and lack of productive outlets can all contribute to unsafe conditions.

My philosophy is simple:

If poverty creates fertile soil for crime, let's make that soil less fertile.

Create opportunity before desperation.

Create recreation before idle time becomes trouble.

Create pathways into business before somebody believes the underground economy is their only option.

Help families reduce expenses.

Create spaces where neighbors actually meet one another.

Give young people reasons to believe their future can be built right here.

That's prevention through preparation.

I'm also not going to pretend that becoming mayor gives one person unlimited authority. Newport News has a City Council and professional city administration. Some of the ideas in this guide would require Council approval. Some require partnerships with businesses, universities or community organizations. Some require Richmond to give localities greater authority. Others may require state or federal funding.

My promise isn't that I can wave a mayoral wand.

My promise is that I'll bring ideas to the table, build coalitions around good ones, listen when residents improve them, fight for the votes and resources necessary to implement them, measure the results—and be willing to change course when something doesn't work.

I want Newport News to become a city willing to **pilot, measure, publish and scale** new solutions.

Some ideas will work.

Some will need modification.

Some may fail.

But I would rather lead a city willing to responsibly experiment with its future than one afraid to imagine one.

And while I'm asking Newport News to look toward the future, I'm not asking us to abandon the people and institutions for whom this city already works. We protect what's working, improve what isn't, and extend opportunity to residents who have historically felt left out of the city's progress.

That's important to me because I don't fit neatly into one box myself.

I understand entrepreneurship and struggle. Entertainment and business. Working people and executives. Formal rooms and neighborhood conversations.

I don't believe those worlds have to remain separated.

I want to help bring them to the same table.

This campaign is therefore about much more than one election.

It is an invitation to imagine what Newport News could become if residents, businesses, institutions, young people, neighborhoods and City Hall began moving toward a shared destination.

A safer city.

A healthier city.

A city that produces.

A city that innovates.

A city with things to do.

A city where local businesses can become major businesses.

A city where young talent doesn't automatically believe success requires leaving home.

A city whose residents can actually **see, feel and experience progress.**

And ultimately, a city capable of becoming a model others study and adapt.

Someone has to be willing to ask the first question.

Someone has to test the first idea.

Somewhere has to become the first node.

Why not Newport News?

Why not NNOW?

Savion Hays

Candidate for Mayor of Newport News

Newport News Opportunity Worldwide — NNOW

People • Places • Progress • Prosperity

SECTION 2 — HOW NEWPORT NEWS GOVERNMENT WORKS

Understanding the Office Before Promising the Future

Before explaining what I want to accomplish as Mayor, I believe residents deserve clarity about **what the Mayor of Newport News can actually do.**

Newport News operates under a **Council-Manager form of government**. That means the Mayor is an important elected leader and public representative of the city, but the Mayor is **not a governor-style executive with unilateral control over city government**. The city's Charter places policymaking authority in a seven-member City Council, while professional administration is led by the City Manager.

Understanding that distinction is important to understanding the NNOW agenda.

THE MAYOR — LEADERSHIP, AGENDA & INFLUENCE

The Mayor of Newport News is elected citywide and serves as one of the seven members of City Council.

Under the City Charter, the Mayor presides over Council meetings and has the **same right to speak and vote as every other Council member**. The Mayor is also formally recognized as the head of city government for ceremonial purposes.

That means the Mayor does not simply give orders to city departments.

The power of the office comes largely through **leadership**:

Setting priorities.

Putting ideas into the public conversation.

Building coalitions.

Working with fellow Council members.

Representing Newport News locally, statewide, nationally and internationally.

Building relationships with businesses, universities, nonprofits and other governments.

Advocating for Newport News before Richmond and Washington.

Using the visibility of the office to bring people together around a common direction.

My view of the Mayor:

The Mayor should be the city's chief advocate, coalition builder and ambassador for its future.

A Mayor may have one vote—but leadership can influence six others and mobilize an entire city.

CITY COUNCIL — WHERE POLICY BECOMES LAW

Newport News City Council consists of the Mayor and six additional Council members.

The Charter is particularly clear here:

City Council is the policy-determining body of Newport News.

Council establishes policy, adopts ordinances and resolutions, approves programs, controls funding and adopts the city's budget. Most substantive Council actions require at least **four affirmative votes**.

That means many NNOW initiatives will require something extremely important:

A coalition.

If I propose Properties for Progress, expanded outdoor fitness infrastructure, new economic-development initiatives or investments in future-city technology, enthusiasm from the Mayor isn't enough.

We have to develop the proposal.

Determine whether it's legal.

Determine what it costs.

Listen to residents.

Identify funding.

Earn Council support.

And ultimately secure the votes necessary to move forward.

I don't see that as a weakness of the system.

I see coalition-building as part of the job.

THE CITY MANAGER — TURNING POLICY INTO OPERATION

This is one of the most important distinctions for residents to understand.

The City Manager—not the Mayor—is Newport News' chief administrative officer.

City Council appoints the City Manager, who is responsible to Council for administering city government. The Manager directs city departments, appoints most department heads, advises Council about the city's finances and future needs, prepares the proposed annual budget and administers that budget after Council adopts it.

This creates an intentional separation between:

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP & POLICY

and

PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATION.

In fact, Newport News' Charter generally prohibits individual Council members from giving orders directly to employees underneath the City Manager. Council members are supposed to deal with administrative services through the Manager.

So a Mayor shouldn't be calling a department employee and saying:

“Do this because I said so.”

Instead, the process is:

Council establishes direction → City Manager administers that direction → City departments execute it.

CITY DEPARTMENTS — WHERE RESIDENTS EXPERIENCE GOVERNMENT

Newport News government includes departments responsible for areas such as police, fire, planning, development, engineering, public works, parks and recreation, human services, libraries, information technology and Waterworks.

These departments are where many policies ultimately become something residents can actually experience.

A Council decision about parks eventually becomes equipment in a neighborhood.

An economic-development strategy eventually becomes businesses and jobs.

An infrastructure appropriation eventually becomes construction.

A public-safety policy eventually reaches streets and neighborhoods.

A budget decision eventually becomes—or doesn't become—a service residents can use.

That's why one of the fundamental principles of NNOW is:

Residents should be able to SEE, FEEL and EXPERIENCE the results of public investment.

THE BUDGET — WHERE PRIORITIES BECOME REAL

Political speeches are free.

Implementation isn't.

The City Manager prepares and submits the proposed annual budget, while City Council ultimately determines funding through the budget process.

That makes budgeting one of the most powerful tools available to local government.

Every major NNOW proposal therefore has to eventually answer:

How much does it cost?

Can existing resources be redirected?

Are state or federal grants available?

Can private partners participate?

Can the project eventually generate revenue or savings?

What does Newport News receive in return for the investment?

This is why NNOW will emphasize:

PILOT → MEASURE → PUBLISH → SCALE

We don't need to spend millions proving an idea that could have been tested for thousands.

Start responsibly.

Measure the outcome.

Publish the results.

Improve the model.

Then scale what works.

RICHMOND — WHEN NEWPORT NEWS DOESN'T HAVE THE POWER

Not every decision affecting Newport News can be made in Newport News.

Virginia local governments operate under authority established by the Commonwealth and the city's Charter, which itself is enacted through the Virginia General Assembly.

That means some NNOW proposals may encounter a simple reality:

The city doesn't currently have the legal authority to do it.

My response won't be to pretend otherwise.

We'll take the argument to Richmond.

Newport News already develops state legislative priorities and seeks changes to state law and its Charter through the legislative process.

As Mayor, I want Newport News to become a stronger advocate for **local choice and municipal innovation**.

When an issue is fundamentally local, I believe residents should have a meaningful voice in deciding how their community operates.

That doesn't mean ignoring Virginia law.

It means **working to change Virginia law when existing law prevents a reasonable local solution.**

WASHINGTON — WHEN THE ISSUE IS FEDERAL

Some issues go beyond both Newport News and Richmond.

Federal grants.

Federal infrastructure.

Military policy.

Federal cannabis law.

Transportation funding.

Environmental programs.

Shipbuilding and defense policy.

When federal cooperation is required, the Mayor should work with Newport News' congressional delegation, federal agencies and regional partners to make sure our city has a voice.

The philosophy remains the same:

WHEREVER THE DECISION IS MADE, NEWPORT NEWS SHOULD HAVE AN ADVOCATE IN THE ROOM.

HOW AN NNOW IDEA BECOMES REALITY

This is the governing process I want residents to see repeatedly throughout this Field Guide:

1. IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

What are residents actually experiencing?

↓

2. DEVELOP THE IDEA

What could Newport News do differently?

↓

3. RESEARCH

Is it legal? What does it cost? Who has authority? Has someone else tried it?

↓

4. LISTEN

Residents, businesses, experts and affected communities improve the proposal.

↓

5. BUILD THE COALITION

Mayor + Council + community + partners.

↓

6. AUTHORIZE & FUND

Council action, budget allocation, grants, partnerships or other lawful mechanisms.

↓

7. IMPLEMENT

City Manager + appropriate departments + partners.

↓

8. MEASURE & PUBLISH

Did it actually work?

↓

9. SCALE, MODIFY OR STOP

Expand successful ideas. Improve imperfect ones. Stop wasting money on failures.

FOUR LEVELS OF THE NNOW AGENDA

Throughout this Field Guide, proposals can be identified according to where action is required:

MAYORAL LEADERSHIP

Things I can champion, convene, advocate for and place on the public agenda.

CITY COUNCIL ACTION

Things requiring ordinances, resolutions, appropriations, policy changes or Council approval.

RICHMOND ACTION

Things requiring additional authority or changes to Virginia law.

FEDERAL ACTION

Things requiring Congress, federal agencies or changes to federal policy.

Some proposals will involve **multiple levels simultaneously**.

That distinction matters.

MY COMMITMENT

I will not tell Newport News:

“Elect me and I can do anything.”

That's not how our government works.

My commitment is different:

If Newport News already has the authority, I will work to build the coalition necessary to use it. If Richmond holds the authority, I will take our case to Richmond. If Washington holds it, I will advocate for Newport News there. And when the private sector, universities or community organizations can accomplish something better than government alone, I will work to bring those partners to the table.

Leadership isn't having unlimited power.

Absolutely. Section 4 should be the **bridge from philosophy into actual governing proposals**. Rather than dumping every initiative immediately, this section establishes the agenda, what you mean by a “promise,” and how you'll evaluate each proposal. Then Sections 5 onward can go initiative-by-initiative.

SECTION 4 — THE NNOW AGENDA

From Vision to Action

A vision only matters if we can turn it into action.

The previous sections explain **why** I am running, **how** Newport News government works, and **what** Newport News Opportunity Worldwide represents.

Now we get to the question residents have every right to ask:

“What are you actually going to do?”

The NNOW Agenda is my working roadmap for answering that question.

It contains initiatives that range from projects Newport News could begin relatively quickly to ambitious ideas requiring research, partnerships, significant investment or changes to Virginia law.

I don't believe responsible leadership requires pretending every idea is equally easy.

It requires knowing the difference between:

WHAT WE CAN START NOW

WHAT WE CAN BUILD TOWARD

and

WHAT WE HAVE TO FIGHT FOR

A LIVING AGENDA

This Field Guide should not be treated as a finished list of commandments.

It is a **living agenda**.

During this campaign, I intend to continue talking with residents, businesses, city employees, educators, young people, community organizations, researchers and policy experts.

Some proposals will improve because somebody asks a question we didn't consider.

New opportunities will emerge.

Some ideas may prove financially or legally impractical.

Others may turn out to be easier than expected.

That's how serious problem-solving should work.

The vision remains consistent. The solutions are allowed to evolve.

I would rather change a proposal because new evidence shows us a better solution than defend a bad idea simply because I said it during a campaign.

THREE LEVELS OF ACTION

For simplicity, the NNOW Agenda divides initiatives into three categories.

1. START NNOW

Practical initiatives we can begin pursuing.

These are concepts that largely fit within existing municipal functions or can begin through partnerships, pilots, community participation and Council action.

Examples include:

Outdoor Fitness Expansion

Install simple, durable exercise equipment throughout appropriate parks and neighborhoods so residents can exercise without needing a gym membership.

Properties for Progress

Explore converting eligible underused properties into opportunities for local businesses, entrepreneurs, marketplaces and community-beneficial development.

Destination Newport News

Develop more reasons for residents and visitors to experience Newport News through entertainment, recreation, food, arts, waterfront activity, events and commercial development.

Youth Recreation & Opportunity

Expand productive activities, sports, entertainment, training and spaces designed specifically around young residents.

Cellphone-Free Community Events

Create voluntary opportunities for residents to put down their phones, meet neighbors and rebuild face-to-face community relationships.

Local Business & Manufacturing Promotion

Increase the visibility of businesses and products created in Newport News and explore ways city purchasing and economic-development efforts can strengthen local production where lawful and competitive.

These aren't necessarily inexpensive or automatic.

But they represent areas where local leadership can begin moving immediately.

2. BUILD NNOW

Ambitious projects that should begin with research and pilots.

Some ideas deserve exploration without immediately committing the city to massive spending.

That's where the NNOW principle becomes:

PILOT → MEASURE → PUBLISH → SCALE

Potential pilot areas include:

Household Energy Resilience

Explore partnerships, grants and incentive programs involving solar energy, energy-efficiency improvements and household battery backup.

Future Energy Infrastructure

Test emerging technologies in controlled environments—including appropriate solar infrastructure, energy-producing pedestrian systems and other technologies—before considering larger deployments.

Clean Water Innovation

Research atmospheric water generation and other decentralized clean-water technologies, including their energy requirements, economics, water quality and environmental effects.

Newport News Food Forests

Explore productive public landscapes incorporating appropriate fruit trees, berries, herbs, perennial crops and community agriculture.

Urban Agriculture

Increase opportunities for locally produced food and investigate how city land, private partnerships and controlled-environment agriculture can contribute.

Future-City Demonstration Zones

Identify appropriate locations where universities, businesses and researchers can test technologies addressing energy, transportation, materials, agriculture, environmental sustainability and quality of life.

The purpose isn't to make Newport News futuristic for appearance's sake.

Technology should solve problems.

If something doesn't meaningfully improve people's lives, save money, create opportunity or increase resilience, we should question why public resources are supporting it.

3. FIGHT FOR NNOW

Changes requiring Richmond, Washington or broader institutional cooperation.

Some of the ideas I support cannot legally be accomplished by Newport News alone.

Rather than hiding that limitation, I want residents to understand it.

These become advocacy priorities.

They may include:

Greater Local Choice

Advocate for Virginia to give cities greater authority to develop solutions for genuinely local issues.

Cannabis & Hemp Policy

Work within Virginia law while advocating for policies that allow Newport News to become a responsible leader in cannabis entrepreneurship, hemp manufacturing, research and innovation.

Energy Reform

Advocate for state policies giving localities and households greater ability to produce, store and manage energy.

Development Authority

Seek additional tools from Richmond when existing state law prevents innovative approaches to housing, economic development, infrastructure or sustainability.

Federal Cannabis & Hemp Reform

Support federal changes that remove unnecessary barriers to lawful research, banking, interstate commerce, agriculture and industry.

Federal Infrastructure & Innovation Funding

Aggressively pursue federal partnerships and resources capable of helping Newport News test and build infrastructure of national significance.

The Mayor shouldn't only advocate inside City Hall.

When Newport News needs Richmond, go to Richmond.

When Newport News needs Washington, go to Washington.

THE NNOW PRIORITY MAP

Our agenda can also be understood through several major areas of city life.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Goal: Make Newport News one of America's safest cities by combining effective public safety with prevention.

Focus areas:

- Crime prevention
- Youth opportunity
- Economic stability
- Community relationships
- Mental-health and addiction resources
- Recreation
- Neighborhood investment
- Effective policing and emergency response

Attack crime from both directions: consequences AND causes.

COST OF LIVING & HOUSEHOLD RESILIENCE

Goal: Explore every reasonable municipal tool that can help residents keep more of what they earn.

Focus areas:

- Energy efficiency
- Household energy generation
- Battery backup
- Food production
- Transportation access
- Housing innovation
- Local production
- Economic opportunity

Government cannot control every household expense.

But where public policy can responsibly reduce costs, we should investigate it.

JOBS, BUSINESS & OWNERSHIP

Goal: Make Newport News one of Virginia's strongest environments for turning skills into businesses and businesses into wealth.

Focus areas:

Entrepreneurship
Workforce development
Manufacturing
Properties for Progress
Small-business support
Technology
Agriculture
Entertainment
Tourism
Local procurement opportunities
Business attraction

The objective isn't merely:

“Get people jobs.”

It is:

JOB → SKILL → BUSINESS → OWNERSHIP → WEALTH

YOUTH & THE NEXT GENERATION

Goal: Make young people believe their future can be built in Newport News.

Focus areas:

Sports
Entertainment
Career training
Entrepreneurship
Technology
Arts
Mentorship
Recreation
Youth civic participation
Public spaces
Education partnerships

If our most talented young residents believe they must leave Newport News to find opportunity, we are exporting one of our greatest resources.

STOP EXPORTING OUR TALENT.

Give young people reasons to build here.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Goal: Work toward making Newport News one of America's healthiest cities.

Health should not begin only when someone enters a hospital.

NNOW emphasizes:

- Fitness
- Nutrition
- Preventive care
- Mental wellness
- Recreation
- Healthy food access
- Community connection
- Walkable activity
- Clean environments

Our philosophy is:

PREVENTION THROUGH PREPARATION.

Prepare people and communities to live healthier lives before preventable problems become emergencies.

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

Goal: Position Newport News as a leader in practical household and municipal sustainability.

Potential areas include:

- Solar energy
- Battery storage
- Energy efficiency
- Resilient infrastructure
- Green construction
- Urban agriculture
- Food forests
- Clean-water innovation

Emerging energy technology
Waste reduction
Hemp-based materials and manufacturing

Our objective isn't simply to call ourselves “green.”

Residents should experience the benefit.

Lower costs.

Greater resilience.

Cleaner neighborhoods.

More local resources.

New industries.

DESTINATION NEWPORT NEWS

Goal: Give people reasons to intentionally come to Newport News.

This includes:

Entertainment
Restaurants
Nightlife
Family activities
Youth experiences
Waterfront development
Sports
Arts and culture
Events
Wellness experiences
Commercial districts
Tourism

The economic cycle is straightforward:

MORE EXPERIENCES



MORE VISITORS



MORE CUSTOMERS



STRONGER BUSINESSES



MORE JOBS



MORE INVESTMENT



EVEN BETTER EXPERIENCES

Entertainment isn't separate from economic development.

It can be an engine of economic development.

FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Goal: Produce more of what Newport News consumes.

Potential initiatives include:

Community agriculture

Food forests

Controlled-environment agriculture

Farmers markets

Local food businesses

School/community partnerships

Food entrepreneurship

Regional agricultural cooperation

We don't need to grow everything.

We need to determine what Newport News can grow **well**.

That eventually connects to the larger NNOW regional concept:

One community develops strength in one area.

Another develops strength somewhere else.

Communities exchange their surplus.

Regional resilience grows.

CANNABIS & HEMP

Goal: Position Newport News to responsibly participate in Virginia's emerging legal cannabis economy while becoming a leader in hemp innovation.

The agenda includes:

Responsible adult-use policy

Education

Local entrepreneurship

Workforce opportunities

Hemp agriculture

Hemp materials

Manufacturing

Research

Sustainability

Advocacy for appropriate local authority

Cannabis is one component.

Hemp potentially touches agriculture, manufacturing, materials, construction, sustainability and research.

Newport News should understand the entire plant economy—not merely retail cannabis.

COMMUNITY

Goal: Build neighborhoods where residents know, support and communicate with one another.

Potential initiatives include:

Cellphone-Free Fridays
Neighborhood gatherings
Community recreation
Local events
Volunteer programs
Youth/adult mentorship
Neighborhood improvement projects
Civic participation

Technology has made it easier to communicate across the planet.

Sometimes it has made it harder to know the person living twenty feet away.

STRONG NEIGHBORS BUILD STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS.

THE FIRST 100 DAYS

If elected, I don't believe the first 100 days should be spent pretending every campaign proposal can immediately become law.

The first 100 days should establish the machinery for implementation.

My initial priorities would include:

1. NNOW LISTENING TOUR

Meet residents throughout Newport News and document priorities by neighborhood and demographic.

2. NNOW INITIATIVE AUDIT

Work with appropriate city professionals to determine the legal authority, estimated costs, existing programs, funding opportunities and obstacles associated with major proposals.

3. PROPERTIES FOR PROGRESS EXPLORATION

Begin identifying what city-owned or otherwise eligible underutilized properties could potentially participate in a pilot.

4. HEALTH & FITNESS ASSESSMENT

Identify parks and neighborhoods where simple outdoor fitness infrastructure could have immediate public benefit.

5. ENERGY & RESILIENCE WORKING GROUP

Bring together utilities, researchers, businesses, universities, residents and energy professionals to identify practical pilot opportunities.

6. DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT CONVERSATION

Bring together restaurants, entertainment businesses, tourism professionals, developers, artists, residents and young people to identify what Newport News is missing.

7. YOUTH VOICE

Create stronger mechanisms for young Newport News residents to participate in conversations about their city.

8. RICHMOND AGENDA

Develop Newport News' requests for additional state authority, funding and legislative changes.

9. GRANT & PARTNERSHIP REVIEW

Identify outside money before automatically reaching for local taxpayer dollars.

10. PUBLIC NNOW DASHBOARD

Begin developing a transparent way for residents to follow major initiatives:

PROPOSED → RESEARCHING → PILOTING → FUNDED → UNDERWAY → COMPLETED → RESULTS

Government should make it easier for residents to determine what happened to an idea after the press conference ended.

HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

NNOW should ultimately be judged through outcomes.

Not slogans.

Not social-media views.

Not ribbon cuttings.

Outcomes.

Depending on the initiative, measurements could include:

Household expenses

Median income

Poverty

Employment

Business creation

Local ownership

Crime and victimization

Youth participation

Health outcomes

Park usage

Tourism

Local food production

Energy production and savings

Vacant-property reuse

Resident satisfaction

Outside investment

Population retention

Young-adult retention

And perhaps the most important measurement:

Do residents believe Newport News is getting better?

Data matters.

So does lived experience.

We should measure both.

THE PROMISE

I am not promising that every idea in this Field Guide will become reality.

I am promising something I believe is more valuable:

Every serious idea deserves serious investigation.

We'll ask:

Is it legal?

Does it solve a real problem?

What will it cost?

Can we test it first?

Can someone else help pay for it?

What does success look like?

Can we measure it?

And most importantly:

Will this make life better for the people of Newport News?

If the answer is yes, let's figure out how to build it.

If Newport News doesn't currently have the authority, let's make our case to Richmond.

If the technology isn't ready, let's research it.

If the first version fails, let's learn from it.

If it works—

Scale it.

This is how the NNOW Vision moves from imagination to implementation.

PEOPLE. PLACES. PROGRESS. PROSPERITY.

THE FUTURE IS NNOW.

Leadership is understanding the power you have, building the influence you need, and knowing how to turn an idea into action.

That is how I intend to approach the office of Mayor.

SECTIONS 7 & 8 — PROGRESS & PROSPERITY

Building the Future — and Making Sure Newport News Benefits From It

The first two pillars of NNOW focus heavily on **people and places**.

The final two answer another question:

HOW DO WE BUILD AN ECONOMY CAPABLE OF SUSTAINING THAT VISION?

PROGRESS is about innovation, infrastructure, technology, sustainability and production.

PROSPERITY is about making sure those advances translate into jobs, businesses, ownership, lower costs and greater economic security for Newport News residents.

They belong together.

Technology without economic benefit can become an expensive demonstration.

Economic growth without innovation can eventually leave a city behind.

NNOW wants both:

BUILD THE FUTURE. OWN A PIECE OF IT.

PART I — PROGRESS

Newport News as a Living Laboratory

Newport News already builds technology capable of traveling across the world's oceans.

Our region is connected to shipbuilding, defense, military installations, universities, engineering and advanced manufacturing.

We don't need to invent a technological identity from scratch.

We need to expand the one we already have.

The PROGRESS pillar asks how Newport News can become a place where emerging ideas are not simply discussed—but **built, tested, measured and improved in the real world.**

Our governing principle remains:

PILOT → MEASURE → PUBLISH → SCALE

PROGRESS PRIORITY 1

THE NNOW ENERGY INITIATIVE

Energy You Can See, Feel & Use

THE PROBLEM

Energy is becoming an increasingly important household expense while our economy becomes more dependent on electricity.

Phones.

Computers.

Appliances.

Transportation.

Heating and cooling.

Businesses.

Data infrastructure.

Future technologies.

Our dependence on reliable electricity is increasing.

NNOW therefore asks:

What can a city do to help households become more efficient and resilient?

THE VISION

Explore a long-term strategy combining:

Energy efficiency

Solar generation

Battery storage

Backup power

Microgrids where appropriate

Emerging renewable technologies

Efficient construction

Public energy demonstrations

The immediate objective is not to disconnect Newport News from the electrical grid.

It's to determine how much household and municipal demand can be **reduced, generated locally or supported during disruptions.**

Imagine households gradually gaining the ability to keep basic devices operating during outages.

Imagine public facilities producing some of their own energy.

Imagine residents seeing measurable savings from efficiency improvements.

That's resilience.

WHO HAS THE POWER?

MAYOR: Champion the initiative, recruit partners and advocate for outside investment.

COUNCIL: Approve appropriate programs, pilots and funding.

CITY ADMINISTRATION: Evaluate facilities, infrastructure, procurement and implementation.

RICHMOND: Necessary where state utility, building or energy laws govern what localities can do.

PRIVATE SECTOR / UNIVERSITIES: Essential for technology, financing, research and implementation.

FIRST STEP

Conduct an **NNOW Energy Opportunity Assessment**.

Before buying technology, determine:

Where does the city consume energy?

Where could efficiency produce the greatest savings?

Which public facilities are appropriate for renewable generation/storage?

Which neighborhoods face the greatest energy burden?

What grants and private financing already exist?

Then pilot.

PROGRESS PRIORITY 2

SOLAR SIDEWALKS & KINETIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Test the Future Before Buying the Future

Emerging infrastructure can potentially generate energy from places we traditionally treat as passive surfaces.

Solar paving.

Solar canopies.

Kinetic or piezoelectric pedestrian systems.

Smart lighting.

Energy-producing public infrastructure.

Some technologies will prove worthwhile.

Others may not.

That's exactly why we should test them.

THE PROPOSAL

Explore an **NNOW Energy Walk** or similar demonstration corridor.

Rather than immediately replacing vehicle roadways, begin somewhere safer and easier to study:

A pedestrian corridor.

Public plaza.

Park.

Campus partnership.

Transit area.

High-foot-traffic destination.

Install a limited demonstration.

Then publicly display:

Energy generated

Installation cost

Maintenance

Durability

Cost per unit of energy

Public usage

If it works, expand it.

If it doesn't:

Publish that too.

Innovation requires being willing to discover that an idea wasn't ready.

PROGRESS PRIORITY 3

CLEAN WATER INNOVATION

Can Newport News Harvest Water From the Air?

Newport News experiences substantial humidity throughout the year.

Atmospheric water generation technology can extract moisture from air and convert it into usable water after appropriate treatment.

That raises an interesting question:

Could atmospheric water become a supplemental decentralized water resource for Newport News?

THE PROPOSAL

Partner with researchers and technology providers to test atmospheric water generation in our local climate.

Potential demonstration locations could eventually include participating:

Grocery stores

Community facilities

Public buildings

Emergency-response locations

But research comes first.

We need to determine:

Water produced per day.

Energy consumed per gallon.

Water-treatment requirements.

Equipment costs.

Maintenance.

Seasonal performance.

Public-health requirements.

Environmental effects.

And importantly:

What happens if atmospheric water harvesting occurs at meaningful scale?

Could significant extraction affect local humidity, vegetation or microclimates?

Or would atmospheric and coastal moisture cycles make the effect negligible at realistic deployment levels?

We shouldn't guess.

Measure it.

PROGRESS PRIORITY 4

THE NNOW FOOD SYSTEM

Grow More Here

Food resilience belongs at the intersection of PEOPLE, PROGRESS and PROSPERITY.

Newport News cannot—and doesn't need to—grow everything residents consume.

But we should investigate what we **can produce competitively**.

That can include:

Traditional agriculture.

Urban agriculture.

Hydroponics.

Vertical growing.

Greenhouses.

Food forests.

Community gardens.

Specialty crops.

Controlled-environment agriculture.

FOOD FORESTS

Appropriate public landscapes could potentially become productive landscapes containing perennial edible plants.

Start with demonstration projects.

Determine:

What grows well?

What residents actually harvest?

What maintenance costs?

What survives?

What produces meaningful food?

Then expand what works.

PROGRESS PRIORITY 5

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Make More Things in Newport News

One of the strongest economic opportunities I see for Newport News is manufacturing.

Not only massive industrial manufacturing.

Manufacturing at every scale.

3D printing.

Digital fabrication.

CNC.

Textiles.

Food manufacturing.

Hemp materials.

Consumer products.

Replacement parts.

Construction materials.

Electronics.

Advanced materials.

Robotics.

Newport News already understands what it means to build things.

NNOW wants to extend that culture of production to more residents and entrepreneurs.

THE PROPOSAL

Explore a network of maker/manufacturing opportunities connecting:

Schools

Libraries

Universities

Businesses

Entrepreneurs

Industrial partners

Workforce development

Properties for Progress

The pathway could become:

LEARN → DESIGN → PROTOTYPE → MANUFACTURE → SELL

Someone shouldn't necessarily need millions of dollars to begin learning how to manufacture something.

PROGRESS PRIORITY 6

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Use AI — Don't Let AI Simply Happen To Us

Artificial intelligence will affect government, education, business, entertainment, manufacturing and employment.

Cities need to prepare for both the opportunity and disruption.

NNOW's approach should emphasize:

AI literacy

Workforce preparation

Responsible municipal use

Entrepreneurship

Creative industries

Automation

Manufacturing

Education

Privacy and accountability

The question isn't whether AI is coming.

It's whether Newport News residents will primarily consume AI—or build businesses and careers around it.

PROGRESS PRIORITY 7

HEMP AS AN INDUSTRIAL MATERIAL

Beyond Cannabis Consumption

Hemp deserves separate consideration from the recreational cannabis conversation.

Potential industrial applications include:

Fibers.

Textiles.

Biocomposites.

Packaging.

Building materials.

Agricultural products.

Consumer products.

Manufacturing inputs.

Research materials.

NNOW should explore whether Newport News can participate in portions of this emerging supply chain.

That could connect:

AGRICULTURE → MATERIALS → MANUFACTURING → PRODUCTS → SALES

PROGRESS PRIORITY 8

THE NNOW LIVING LABORATORY

Invite the World to Test Ideas Here

I want Newport News to develop a reputation among researchers, universities, startups and established companies:

IF YOU HAVE A TECHNOLOGY THAT COULD IMPROVE CITY LIFE, COME PROVE IT HERE.

Not unrestricted experimentation.

Structured pilots.

Clear safety requirements.

Defined locations.

Transparent costs.

Public performance measurements.

Research partnerships.

Potential areas could include:

Energy.

Water.

Agriculture.

Materials.

Transportation.

Environmental technology.

Construction.

Accessibility.

Public health.

Manufacturing.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Eventually, companies could begin approaching Newport News because being successfully tested here has value.

That transforms innovation itself into economic development.

And that leads directly into our final pillar.

PART II — PROSPERITY

Turning Progress Into Ownership

Prosperity is different from economic activity.

A city can have billions of dollars moving through it while many residents remain financially insecure.

A city can attract major companies while local entrepreneurs struggle.

A city can experience development while wealth generated by that development immediately leaves the community.

NNOW therefore asks:

SECTION 9 — BUILDING THE NNOW MOVEMENT

From Vision to Votes

A campaign cannot survive on ideas alone.

A vision has to become a **movement**, and a movement requires people willing to give something to it: their time, their voice, their skills, their relationships, their resources—and ultimately their vote.

This campaign began unconventionally.

It began late.

It began as a write-in campaign.

And it began largely as a **one-man operation**.

I don't view that as something to hide.

It demonstrates exactly what NNOW is about:

START WITH WHAT YOU HAVE. BUILD. PROVE. GROW.

The next phase is turning one candidate with a vision into an organized network of Newport News residents.

THE CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE

Build a Movement, Not Just an Audience

Social-media followers are valuable.

Views are valuable.

Press coverage is valuable.

But none of them automatically become votes.

The campaign must continually move people through a simple pathway:

DISCOVER



UNDERSTAND



BELIEVE



JOIN



PARTICIPATE



VOTE

A person may first discover NNOW through a TikTok.

Then watch an NNOW Network video.

Then visit the website.

Then see us in the community.

Then volunteer.

Then put a sign in their yard.

Then tell five friends.

Then write **SAVION HAYS** on their ballot.

That is campaign conversion.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 1

IDENTIFIED SUPPORTERS

The Number That Matters

The campaign should track many numbers:

Followers.

Views.

Shares.

Donations.

Volunteers.

Signs.

But one measurement should sit above the rest:

IDENTIFIED NEWPORT NEWS SUPPORTERS

Someone saying:

“I'm voting for Savion Hays.”

That's different from liking a video.

We need to build that list every day.

A basic supporter database should track:

Name

Contact information

Neighborhood / precinct when known

Support level

Volunteer interest

Yard-sign request

Skills

Business/community affiliations

Who introduced them

Follow-up needed

Voting commitment

Every conversation should have the potential to become a relationship.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 2

BUILD THE FIRST 25

From One-Man Band to Campaign Team

We don't need hundreds of volunteers before becoming organized.

We need the **first 25 dependable people**.

Think of them as the founding NNOW campaign team.

They don't all need political experience.

We need people who:

Know neighborhoods.

Know businesses.

Know young people.

Know community organizations.

Can make phone calls.

Can knock doors.

Can distribute literature.

Can install signs.

Can create content.

Can organize events.

Can introduce us to other people.

Relationships are campaign infrastructure.

From those first 25 people, leadership will naturally begin emerging.

THE CORE CAMPAIGN TEAM

As the campaign grows, several functions need clear ownership.

CAMPAIGN MANAGER

Keeps the entire operation moving.

Schedule.

Priorities.

Deadlines.

Events.

Team coordination.

Problems.

The campaign manager protects the candidate's most valuable resource:

TIME.

FIELD DIRECTOR

Responsible for the ground campaign.

Volunteers.

Canvassing.

Neighborhood organization.

Signs.

Voter contact.

Events.

Precinct activity.

Election Day organization.

Eventually, this person should know:

WHERE OUR SUPPORTERS ARE.

COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA DIRECTOR

This role is particularly important for an NNOW campaign built around content.

Responsible for:

Video production.

Photography.

Editing.

Social media.

Press.

Brand consistency.

NNOW Network.

Content calendar.

Documenting the campaign.

This person doesn't simply make advertisements.

They document the movement while it's happening.

FINANCE / TREASURER FUNCTION

Campaign money has legal reporting requirements.

Someone must maintain accurate records of:

Contributions.

Expenses.

Receipts.

Donor information.

Reporting deadlines.

Campaign accounts.

Required disclosures.

Virginia campaign-finance compliance.

This is not the place for improvisation.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Someone needs to make sure people who say:

“How can I help?”

actually receive an answer.

Volunteer interest should quickly become an assignment.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Build relationships with:

Neighborhood leaders.

Businesses.

Nonprofits.

Faith communities.

Young people.

Artists.

Educators.

Veterans.

Parents.

Senior communities.

Civic organizations.

The objective isn't simply endorsements.

It's listening.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 3

NEIGHBORHOOD NODES

Organize the Campaign Like NNOW

The campaign itself can demonstrate the NNOW philosophy.

Instead of everything flowing through one person, create **nodes**.

A supporter becomes a neighborhood node.

They know five people.

Those five know five more.

Another person becomes a business node.

Another becomes a youth node.

Another becomes a university node.

Another becomes an entertainment node.

Another becomes a faith/community node.

The network expands.

ONE PERSON SHOULD NOT HAVE TO KNOW EVERYONE.

ONE PERSON NEEDS TO KNOW SOMEONE WHO KNOWS THEM.

That's network building.

NNOW NEIGHBORHOOD CAPTAINS

Eventually recruit supporters willing to become informal neighborhood or precinct captains.

Their job can include:

Knowing supporters nearby.

Distributing campaign materials.

Hosting small conversations.

Recruiting volunteers.

Identifying neighborhood issues.

Helping residents understand the write-in process.

Reporting what they're hearing back to the campaign.

This creates something social media cannot:

LOCAL TRUST.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 4

FUNDRAISING

Finance the Mission Without Losing the Mission

Campaigning costs money.

Signs.

Printing.

Advertising.

Video.

Events.

Transportation.

Website costs.

Technology.

Staff.

Election-Day operations.

The objective isn't simply to raise the largest amount possible.

It's to build enough financial capacity to **communicate and organize effectively**.

THE FUNDRAISING LADDER

Don't only chase wealthy donors.

Build multiple levels of participation.

GRASSROOTS

\$5

\$10

\$20

\$33

\$50

A small donation can turn a passive follower into somebody personally invested in the campaign.

SUPPORTERS

\$100

\$250

\$500

These supporters can finance meaningful blocks of campaign activity.

MAJOR SUPPORTERS

Seek lawful larger contributions from people who genuinely believe in the campaign and understand that financial support does not purchase government decisions.

Every contribution must comply with applicable Virginia campaign-finance law and reporting requirements.

SUPPORT BUYS A CAMPAIGN A VOICE. IT DOES NOT BUY THE GOVERNMENT.

WHAT ARE WE RAISING MONEY FOR?

Fundraising becomes easier when people understand the objective.

Instead of:

“Donate to my campaign.”

Say:

Help us print 1,000 pieces of literature.

Help us put signs throughout Newport News.

Help us produce NNOW Network content.

Help us host a community conversation.

Help us reach young voters.

Help us educate voters about the write-in process.

People understand tangible missions.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 5

THE CONTENT ENGINE

Become the Campaign People Actually See

This campaign has an opportunity to communicate differently.

Instead of relying primarily on signs, mailers and occasional appearances, NNOW can operate like a **media organization**.

That's the purpose of:

NNOW NETWORK

The network becomes the campaign's living video archive.

CONTENT CATEGORIES

THE VISION

Short explanations of NNOW policies.

People.

Places.

Progress.

Prosperity.

MAYOR HAYS IN THE CITY

Don't explain Newport News exclusively from a room.

Go there.

Parks.

Businesses.

Waterfront.

City Center.

Neighborhoods.

Commercial corridors.

Underused spaces.

Events.

SHOW THE PLACE WHILE DISCUSSING THE IDEA.

WHAT NEWPORT NEWS TOLD ME TODAY

Talk with residents.

Ask questions.

Listen.

Then report back:

“Three people brought this up today...”

That shows policy developing through conversation rather than only from campaign headquarters.

LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHTS

Highlight businesses already contributing to Newport News.

The campaign shouldn't only talk about what the city lacks.

SHOW WHAT'S ALREADY WORKING.

NNOW EXPLAINS

Simple civics and policy videos:

What does the Mayor actually control?

What does Council control?

Why does Richmond matter?

Where do our taxes go?

How does zoning work?

What is Properties for Progress?

What does local choice mean?

Educated voters strengthen democracy.

THE CAMPAIGN JOURNEY

Let people see the process.

The signs.

The meetings.

The workouts.

The late nights.

The setbacks.

The volunteers.

The community events.

The victories.

The first endorsement.

The first major event.

The first thousand supporters.

DOCUMENT HISTORY WHILE MAKING IT.

THE FIRST NODE

Long-form footage from the campaign should simultaneously become material for:

THE FIRST NODE

The documentary tells the larger story:

Can an unconventional write-in candidate introduce a radically optimistic vision for his hometown and build a movement around it?

Whether something happens in front of ten people or ten thousand, document it.

Today's ordinary footage may become tomorrow's historical footage.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 6

AUTHENTICITY WITHOUT CHAOS

One Candidate — Different Rooms

I don't believe leadership requires pretending to be someone you're not.

Newport News contains many worlds.

Business.

Military.

Shipbuilding.

Nightlife.

Universities.

Neighborhoods.

Faith communities.

Artists.

Young people.

Professionals.

Working families.

The objective isn't changing personalities for different audiences.

It's being capable of respectfully entering different rooms while remaining the same person.

Some days that means a suit.

Some days it means workout clothes.

Some days it means sitting in a business meeting.

Some nights it means talking politics where residents actually socialize.

Leadership should be comfortable around the entire city.

But public office also requires judgment.

The standard should always be:

AUTHENTIC ENOUGH TO RELATE. DISCIPLINED ENOUGH TO LEAD.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 7

COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNING

Go Where People Already Are

Don't wait for everyone to attend political events.

Go to:

Community events.

Restaurants.

Businesses.

Parks.

Sporting events.

Neighborhood gatherings.

College areas.

Entertainment venues.

Markets.

Festivals.

Public meetings.

The campaign should become something residents **encounter naturally**.

And the first question doesn't always need to be:

“Will you vote for me?”

Sometimes the better question is:

“WHAT DOES NEWPORT NEWS NEED?”

Listen first.

Then explain where NNOW connects.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 8

YOUNG VOTERS

Give Them Something Worth Voting For

Young voters shouldn't only hear from politicians immediately before Election Day.

Talk about issues affecting their actual lives:

Jobs.

Housing.

Entertainment.

Technology.

Cannabis policy.

Entrepreneurship.

Sports.

Nightlife.

Transportation.

Education.

Public spaces.

Cost of living.

Their future in Newport News.

Don't lecture young adults about civic participation.

GIVE THEM A REASON TO PARTICIPATE.

And then make sure they understand how to vote.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 9

WRITE-IN EDUCATION

Recognition Isn't Enough

This campaign faces a challenge conventional candidates don't:

Supporters must remember to **write the candidate's name**.

That makes voter education one of the campaign's most important operational responsibilities.

As Election Day approaches, campaign communication should increasingly emphasize:

WRITE IN

SAVION HAYS

FOR MAYOR

The vision gets attention.

The name gets the vote.

Campaign materials should use consistent spelling and clear instructions based on official Virginia election guidance.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 10

SIGNS ARE NODES

Turn Visibility Into Conversations

Yard signs still matter.

But don't treat them merely as advertisements.

Every sign represents:

A supporter.

A household.

A neighborhood.

A potential volunteer.

A potential introduction.

A node.

Track where signs go.

As geographic support grows, the campaign can begin seeing where additional organizing is needed.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 11

ENDORSEMENTS & VALIDATORS

Not everyone will first trust a candidate because of something the candidate says.

Sometimes trust travels through people they already know.

Seek support from:

Community leaders.

Business owners.

Artists.

Educators.

Veterans.

Young leaders.

Neighborhood advocates.

Athletes.

Entertainers.

Professionals.

Former officials where appropriate.

But don't only chase famous names.

A respected person on one block can influence more votes on that block than someone with a million followers somewhere else.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY 12

EVENTS THAT DON'T FEEL LIKE POLITICAL EVENTS

Not every campaign event needs:

A podium.

Rows of folding chairs.

A long speech.

NNOW events can include:

Fitness meetups.

Community walks.

Business crawls.

Youth conversations.

Music.

Food.

Sports.

Neighborhood cleanups.

Policy discussions.

Technology demonstrations.

Cellphone-Free Fridays.

The campaign itself should demonstrate the type of active community we're advocating for.

THE DAILY CAMPAIGN SYSTEM

What Happens Every Day

Being a one-man operation makes prioritization critical.

Until the team grows, every campaign day should accomplish at least five things:

1. TALK TO PEOPLE

One meaningful real-world campaign interaction.

2. CREATE

Produce at least one original piece of campaign content.

3. RECRUIT

Ask someone to volunteer, host a sign, introduce someone or otherwise participate.

4. BUILD A RELATIONSHIP

Business owner.

Community leader.

Resident.

Organization.

Potential donor.

Media contact.

5. RECORD THE DATA

Who did we meet?

What did they say?

Do they support us?

What's the follow-up?

DON'T LET RELATIONSHIPS LIVE ONLY IN YOUR PHONE'S TEXT MESSAGES.

Put them into the campaign system.

THE WEEKLY CAMPAIGN RHYTHM

Each week should contain:

FIELD TIME

Campaign physically in Newport News.

CONTENT TIME

Batch-record videos so content doesn't consume every day.

FUNDRAISING TIME

Make direct asks.

VOLUNTEER TIME

Recruit, train and assign.

POLICY TIME

Continue strengthening proposals.

ADMINISTRATIVE TIME

Finance records, compliance, scheduling and correspondence.

REVIEW TIME

What worked?

What didn't?

What did residents tell us?

What needs to change next week?

THE NNOW CAMPAIGN DASHBOARD

Every week, update:

SUPPORT

Identified supporters: _____

PEOPLE

Active volunteers: _____

Neighborhood captains: _____

VISIBILITY

Yard signs placed: _____

Doors/conversations: _____

DIGITAL

Content produced: _____

Local reach: _____

Website visitors: _____

MONEY

Raised this week: \$_____

Total raised: \$_____

Campaign cash available: \$_____

COMMUNITY

Businesses contacted: _____

Organizations contacted: _____

Community leaders contacted: _____

CONVERSION

New supporter contacts collected: _____

Volunteer signups: _____

Yard-sign requests: _____

Donors: _____

These numbers tell us whether the campaign is actually growing.

THE FIRST MILESTONES

Before worrying about tens of thousands of votes, build the first layers.

25 ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

Then:

100 IDENTIFIED SUPPORTERS

Then:

250

500

1,000

2,500

5,000

Each milestone means the network is becoming harder to ignore.

THE WRITE-IN REALITY

Running as a write-in candidate changes the strategy.

We cannot depend on someone entering the voting booth, seeing the name **Savion Hays**, and deciding to vote for it.

They have to know the name **before they arrive**.

That means repetition matters.

Community presence matters.

Signs matter.

Content matters.

Personal relationships matter.

And voter education matters.

THE CAMPAIGN HAS TO EXIST IN THEIR HEAD BEFORE THE NAME CAN EXIST ON THEIR BALLOT.

FROM ONE TO MANY

This campaign started with one person.

One idea.

One website.

One sign.

One conversation.

That's okay.

Networks don't begin as networks.

THEY BEGIN WITH THE FIRST NODE.

One supporter becomes five.

Five become twenty-five.

Twenty-five reach hundreds.

Hundreds reach thousands.

At that point this stops being:

“Savion's campaign.”

It becomes:

OUR CAMPAIGN.

And that is the operational goal of NNOW.

THE CAMPAIGN STANDARD

Every campaign activity should answer at least one of these questions:

Does this earn a vote?

Does this recruit a person?

Does this raise resources?

Does this increase name recognition?

Does this strengthen credibility?

Does this teach us something about Newport News?

Does this help organize supporters?

If it does none of them, we should seriously question why we're spending limited campaign time on it.

THE MOVEMENT

I am running for Mayor.

But NNOW cannot depend entirely on one person.

If we truly believe Newport News can become safer, healthier, more innovative, more exciting and more prosperous, then building that city will require far more than whoever occupies the Mayor's seat.

Residents.

Businesses.

Council.

City employees.

Young people.

Universities.

Nonprofits.

Investors.

Creators.

Neighborhoods.

Richmond.

Washington.

All have roles.

THE MAYOR CAN HELP CALL THE PLAY.

THE CITY HAS TO RUN IT.

This campaign is our opportunity to build that team.

JOIN THE NETWORK.

BUILD THE FIRST NODE.

WRITE IN SAVION HAYS FOR MAYOR.

SECTION 10 — THE ROAD TO ELECTION DAY

78 Days to Build the Network

There is no pretending we started early.

There is no pretending we're running a conventional campaign.

We entered this race with limited time, limited infrastructure and without the advantage of having our name automatically presented to voters on the ballot.

That changes the mission.

It doesn't make the mission impossible.

From **August 17 to November 3, 2026**, every day has value.

We do not have time to campaign like everyone else.

WE HAVE TO BUILD FASTER.

COMMUNICATE LOUDER.

ORGANIZE SMARTER.

AND BE PRESENT WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE.

The objective over these final 78 days is straightforward:

TURN A CANDIDATE INTO A CAMPAIGN.

TURN A CAMPAIGN INTO A NETWORK.

TURN A NETWORK INTO VOTES.

PHASE I — BUILD THE FOUNDATION

August 17–31

Introduce the Man. Introduce the Vision.

August is about **awareness and infrastructure**.

Before asking someone to write in Savion Hays, we have to give them a reason to care who Savion Hays is.

The message:

THERE IS ANOTHER VISION FOR NEWPORT NEWS.

This is when we introduce:

Savion Hays

NNOW

The Four Pillars

People • Places • Progress • Prosperity

Why I'm Running

Why Not Newport News?

The First Node

And most importantly, we start listening.

AUGUST OBJECTIVES

BUILD THE TEAM

Recruit the first:

25 NNOW VOLUNTEERS

Identify people capable of helping with:

Field.

Media.

Fundraising.

Community outreach.

Signs.

Events.

Administration.

Policy.

Young-voter outreach.

BUILD THE DATABASE

Every serious supporter enters the campaign system.

Initial target:

250 IDENTIFIED SUPPORTERS

Not 250 followers.

250 Newport News residents we can communicate with again.

BUILD THE CONTENT LIBRARY

Produce the foundational NNOW videos:

Why I'm Running

What Is NNOW?

The Four Pillars

People

Places

Progress

Prosperity

Poverty & Public Safety

Destination Newport News

Properties for Progress

Health & Fitness

Energy & Household Resilience

Youth Opportunity

Local Choice

The website should increasingly become a place where someone can **watch the campaign**, not just read about it.

BUILD THE FIELD PRESENCE

Start appearing consistently throughout Newport News.

Not only political events.

Go where Newport News already lives.

Talk.

Listen.

Record.

Ask:

“WHAT WOULD MAKE NEWPORT NEWS BETTER FOR YOU?”

PHASE II — BUILD THE MOVEMENT

September 1–30

Turn Awareness Into Participation

September is when NNOW must begin feeling larger than one candidate.

People should start seeing:

Signs.

Volunteers.

Videos.

Business supporters.

Community conversations.

Events.

Endorsements.

Neighborhood activity.

Different people repeating the same message.

THE NETWORK BECOMES VISIBLE.

SEPTEMBER OBJECTIVES

Build toward:

1,000+ IDENTIFIED SUPPORTERS

Develop neighborhood/precinct organization.

Increase yard-sign placement.

Begin volunteer canvassing.

Create regular community events.

Develop business relationships.

Begin structured fundraising.

Seek community validators and endorsements.

Increase local-media outreach.

Continue producing NNOW Network programming.

TAKE THE CAMPAIGN TO THE PEOPLE

September should contain consistent:

Door-to-door conversations

Business visits

Community events

Youth outreach

College-area outreach

Neighborhood conversations

Fitness/community events

Entertainment/cultural outreach

Senior engagement

Faith/community relationships

Different communities require different conversations.

But they should hear the same underlying philosophy:

THIS CITY SHOULD WORK FOR MORE OF ITS PEOPLE.

FUND THE NETWORK

September is also when fundraising must become systematic.

Set weekly goals.

Make direct asks.

Hold small fundraising gatherings.

Develop online grassroots giving.

Approach people capable of larger lawful contributions.

And tell donors exactly what their money helps accomplish.

DON'T JUST FUND A CANDIDATE.

HELP FUND THE COMMUNICATION REQUIRED TO GIVE NEWPORT NEWS A CHOICE.

PHASE III — TURN SUPPORT INTO VOTES

October 1–25

Savion Hays Must Become a Name People Remember

By October, the campaign message begins changing.

NNOW still matters.

Policy still matters.

Community still matters.

But now:

SAVION HAYS

has to become unavoidable.

Because this is a write-in campaign.

A supporter who loves NNOW but forgets the candidate's name cannot cast the intended vote.

OCTOBER OBJECTIVES

Push toward:

5,000+ IDENTIFIED SUPPORTERS

Expand neighborhood captains.

Increase door-to-door voter contact.

Increase signs.

Increase campaign events.

Increase local-media appearances.

Increase endorsements.

Increase fundraising.

Increase volunteer recruitment.

And dramatically increase:

WRITE-IN EDUCATION.

THE MESSAGE BECOMES SIMPLER

August:

“Here's the vision.”

September:

“Join the movement.”

October:

“WRITE IN SAVION HAYS.”

People who want policy details can still access the Field Guide and NNOW Network.

But mass communication becomes increasingly simple.

SAVION HAYS

MAYOR

WRITE IN

NOVEMBER 3

NNOW

Repetition wins memory.

PHASE IV — GET OUT THE VOTE

October 26–November 2

Seven Days. One Mission.

The final week isn't the time to introduce fifteen new policies.

The vision has already been presented.

Now the campaign becomes an organizing operation.

FIND OUR PEOPLE.

REMIND OUR PEOPLE.

TEACH OUR PEOPLE HOW TO VOTE.

GET OUR PEOPLE TO VOTE.

Every volunteer should understand that mission.

FINAL-WEEK PRIORITIES

Contact identified supporters.

Confirm voting plans.

Provide accurate official voting information.

Push write-in education.

Deploy signs strategically and legally.

Flood social media with clear name recognition.

Mobilize neighborhood captains.

Contact volunteers.

Contact donors.

Contact businesses.

Contact everyone who previously said:

“I SUPPORT YOU.”

Support becomes meaningful when it becomes a ballot.

ELECTION DAY

November 3, 2026

Election Day should not be chaotic.

By then, the campaign should know:

Who our volunteers are.

Where our supporters are.

Which neighborhoods need attention.

Who requested voting information.

Who needs reminders.

Where campaign activity is legally permitted.

What volunteers are responsible for.

The candidate's job becomes:

BE VISIBLE.

BE POSITIVE.

BE EVERYWHERE POSSIBLE.

THANK PEOPLE.

KEEP THE ENERGY HIGH.

And until the polls close:

[WRITE IN SAVION HAYS.](#)

THE 78-DAY SCOREBOARD

Every Sunday, the campaign should answer:

How many identified supporters do we have?

How many volunteers?

How many neighborhood captains?

How many yard signs?

How much money did we raise?

How many voter conversations occurred?

How many businesses/community leaders did we contact?

How many pieces of content did we produce?

How many people joined through the website?

What issues did residents bring up most often?

Then:

WHAT DO WE CHANGE NEXT WEEK?

Campaigning should operate exactly like NNOW government:

ACT → MEASURE → LEARN → ADJUST.

PROTECT THE CANDIDATE'S TIME

As the campaign grows, the candidate cannot continue doing everything.

Every task should eventually be divided into:

ONLY SAVION CAN DO THIS

Speaking.

Interviews.

Major donor conversations.

Key relationships.

Policy leadership.

Public appearances.

Filming candidate content.

SOMEONE ELSE CAN DO THIS

Editing.

Scheduling.

Sign delivery.

Data entry.

Volunteer coordination.

Routine email.

Graphic production.

Event logistics.

Research support.

Administrative follow-up.

The objective is to gradually remove the candidate from tasks that don't require the candidate.

THE CANDIDATE'S JOB IS TO WIN VOTES.

STAY DISCIPLINED

Attention will bring criticism.

People will misunderstand proposals.

Opponents may attack.

Social media will tempt us into pointless arguments.

Not every comment deserves a response.

Not every insult deserves a rebuttal.

Not every controversy deserves a campaign day.

Ask:

DOES RESPONDING TO THIS HELP US WIN?

Correct meaningful misinformation.

Answer legitimate questions.

Defend the vision.

Then keep moving.

DON'T LET SOMEONE WITH A KEYBOARD CONTROL THE CAMPAIGN CALENDAR.

KEEP LISTENING

Winning should never require becoming disconnected from the people we're asking to represent.

Even as the campaign grows:

Keep walking.

Keep visiting businesses.

Keep attending events.

Keep talking with young people.

Keep talking with seniors.

Keep talking with people who disagree.

Keep asking:

“WHAT DOES NEWPORT NEWS NEED?”

Because NNOW should continue evolving from what Newport News tells us.

WIN OR LEARN — BUT PLAY TO WIN

There is value in introducing ideas.

There is value in changing the conversation.

There is value in inspiring people.

There is value in building a network.

But this is still an election.

WE ARE RUNNING TO WIN.

We respect our opponents.

We respect the office.

We respect the voters.

And then we compete for every vote available to us.

CLOSING STATEMENT

A Call to Newport News

There are moments when a community has to decide whether it is satisfied simply maintaining what already exists—or whether it is ready to imagine what comes next.

I believe Newport News has reached one of those moments.

Look around our city.

Look at what we already have.

We build aircraft carriers.

We build submarines.

We educate brilliant young people.

We raise entrepreneurs.

We produce artists.

We produce soldiers.

We produce engineers.

We produce tradespeople.

We produce families who have called these neighborhoods home for generations.

NEWPORT NEWS IS NOT A CITY WITHOUT RESOURCES.

NEWPORT NEWS IS A CITY WITH UNREALIZED POSSIBILITY.

And I'm tired of measuring our potential by somebody else's city.

Why should our young people automatically believe excitement is somewhere else?

Why should an entrepreneur believe opportunity is somewhere else?

Why should families have to leave Newport News to find experiences they wish existed here?

Why should the technologies of tomorrow be invented somewhere else, manufactured somewhere else and tested somewhere else?

Why should the next great Virginia destination automatically be somewhere else?

WHY NOT HERE?

We don't have to wait for someone to come save Newport News.

The people capable of building its next chapter are already here.

WE ARE NEWPORT NEWS.

The mechanic.

The teacher.

The shipbuilder.

The student.

The artist.

The entrepreneur.

The veteran.

The chef.

The nurse.

The engineer.

The mother raising her children.

The father working overtime.

The teenager with an idea nobody has taken seriously yet.

The retiree who remembers what this city was.

The newcomer imagining what it could become.

Different neighborhoods.

Different generations.

Different incomes.

Different backgrounds.

But one city.

OUR CITY.

And there will be people who say the vision is too big.

Good.

Newport News builds machines weighing tens of thousands of tons that cross oceans carrying thousands of people.

DON'T TELL THIS CITY IT DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO BUILD BIG THINGS.

There will be people who say:

“We've never done that before.”

Then perhaps it's time somebody tried.

There will be people who say:

“That won't work.”

Then let's test it.

Measure it.

Improve it.

And if they're right, learn from it.

But if they're wrong—

BUILD IT.

We aren't promising perfection.

We're demanding progress.

We aren't declaring war on the Newport News that exists.

WE ARE FIGHTING FOR THE NEWPORT NEWS THAT CAN EXIST.

A city where children see futures.

A city where families can breathe financially.

A city where neighborhoods feel safe.

A city where entrepreneurs become owners.

A city where health begins before the hospital.

A city that grows food.

A city that makes things.

A city that creates culture.

A city that experiments.

A city that entertains.

A city that attracts investment.

A city people travel to instead of simply traveling through.

A city where progress reaches the people who built it.

That's the mission.

PEOPLE.

PLACES.

PROGRESS.

PROSPERITY.

Seventy-eight days isn't a lot of time.

But history doesn't always give you comfortable timelines.

Sometimes the door opens.

And you move.

This is our door.

This is our city.

This is our opportunity.

So I'm asking everyone who has ever complained that there isn't enough to do here—

Help us build something.

Everyone who has ever said City Hall doesn't hear them—

Make your voice impossible to ignore.

Everyone who has ever thought about leaving because opportunity seemed somewhere else—

Help us create it here.

Everyone who has ever looked at Newport News and imagined something greater—

THIS CAMPAIGN IS YOUR INVITATION.

Put out a sign.

Make a phone call.

Knock on a door.

Talk to your neighbor.

Volunteer.

Donate.

Create.

Organize.

Vote.

And bring somebody with you.

One person becomes two.

Two become ten.

Ten become a neighborhood.

Neighborhoods become a city.

And one node connects to another.

Until eventually—

THE WHOLE CITY MOVES.

Newport News:

Stand up.

Stand up for the people who built this city.

Stand up for the generation inheriting it.

Stand up for the neighborhoods that haven't experienced enough of its progress.

Stand up for the businesses trying to grow here.

Stand up for the dreamers who refuse to believe our best days already happened.

And when somebody asks us why we believe Newport News can do all of this—

Don't give them a hundred-page explanation.

Give them three words:

WHY NOT NNOW?

November 3, 2026.

WRITE IN SAVION HAYS FOR MAYOR.

Let's turn Bad News into Good News.

Let's build The First Node.

NEWPORT NEWS — STAND UP.