

YMCA gets \$1 million from Norfolk Foundation

BY LAURA GIRRESCH
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The YMCA of South Hampton Roads recently received a boost in its plan to raise \$21.9 million for capital improvements. A \$1 million grant from the Norfolk Foundation is the largest to a single non-profit that the foundation has awarded in its history.

The grant will be distributed as \$250,000 in each of four years, if the YMCA can raise \$5 million a year in donations.

The YMCA, which serves about 150,000 people in the region, wants to use the capital improvement plan to

construct facilities, renovate some existing ones, build a regional day camp and improve Camp Silver Beach on the Eastern Shore.

Most of that will happen in the next four years, depending on how fast donations come in.

Christine Morris, the senior program officer at the Norfolk Foundation who worked with the grant, said the foundation liked the YMCA's scholarship program and its interest in early childhood.

"From the board's position, the regional position, they touch the lives of so many people," she said.

The individual start dates

PROJECTS PLANNED

Capital improvements totaling \$21.9 million for the next four years:

Change Lifestyle Center in Western Branch in Chesapeake to a YMCA to serve that area and north Suffolk.

Build facility in Princess Anne Commons in Virginia Beach

Expand and renovate Norfolk Family YMCA

on YMCA projects that will benefit from the grant vary, said Mita Vail, vice president of development for South Hampton Roads YMCA.

Expand and renovate Great Bridge/Hickory Family YMCA in Chesapeake

Build Family Fun Zones — where family members can exercise together — at four branches

Add Regional Outdoor Day Camp and Youth Field Sports Center

Improve facilities at Camp Silver Beach on the Eastern Shore

Expanding the Norfolk Family YMCA, building a facility at Princess Anne Commons in Virginia Beach and enhancing Camp Silver

Beach are high priorities, Vail said.

Finding the money or obtaining the land can determine when the big projects go forward.

"There's a lot of factors into whether we could hit the mark and say, 'Let's go with it,'" Vail said.

"The campaign is a five-year effort, and the projects will sequentially fall into place as the pledges are secured," said Chuck Harris, president and CEO of South Hampton Roads YMCA.

The acquisition of the new location in north Suffolk — a Lifestyle Center that will be converted into a YMCA — is

the one project already under way. The YMCA of South Hampton Roads bought the space for \$6 million, and the facility will open in July.

"That probably put us 16 to 18 months ahead of what our plan was," Harris said. He said the other projects are running on schedule.

"Hopefully we're looking at a three- to five-year period, but we still have a tremendous amount of money to raise," said Billy George, senior vice president of the YMCA of South Hampton Roads.

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