MONROE WARD
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY
SPRING 2008
FAKHTEH DASTGHEIB
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Virginia Commonwealth University - Spring 2008
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Monroe Ward Neighborhood Plan has been prepared for the Studio II class in Spring 2008 as the last requirement of the Masters of Urban and Regional Planning program. Between 1814 and the 1950s, Monroe Ward thrived as an upscale residential part of Richmond; ideally located between the Fan, Jackson Ward and Capital Square. Based upon the evaluation of existing elements and subsequent assets and liabilities in the neighborhood, the Monroe Ward Neighborhood Plan envisions a mixed used community containing office and commercial spaces together with market-rate architecturally distinct multifamily structures in the downtown and adjacent to the VCU facilities. The neighborhood will serve as a diverse social and economic place for students, artists and young professionals. This plan makes recommendations for a vibrant community defined by its connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods, inclusive historic character, urban setting, and mixed land use. Circulation and parking, community services, and open spaces are a critical element of the plan. This vision was used as the basis upon which the six planning goals were developed. These goals promote the achievement of the vision and provide the basis for more detailed plan recommendations. These goals and recommendations are concisely as follows:

Map 1: Location of the Study Area (Source: City of Richmond GIS Data)
Study Area

**LAND USE AND ZONING:** vibrant and diverse neighborhood-oriented commercial, office and multifamily residential

**HISTORY:** Ensure Preservation of the historic character of the community

**PARKS AND OPEN SPACE:** Neighborhood parks and open space areas that enhance the vibrancy of the neighborhood

**HOUSING:** Provide market rate housing

**CIRCULATION:** Ensure a safe and efficient circulation system to accommodate the movement of people and the vehicular traffic

**URBAN DESIGN:** Enhance Neighborhood’s vibrancy and dynamic character of Monroe Ward through a cohesive design and aesthetic unity

**SUSTAINABILITY:** Achieve a sustainable healthy, vibrant, environment in the neighborhood
INTRODUCTION

Monroe Ward faced an uncertain future in the midst of technological and socioeconomic changes such as: the shift of residential cores, the introduction of the automobile, the creation of the downtown expressway and later the expansion of Virginia Commonwealth University. The current state of Monroe Ward reflects its inability to adjust to the new changes; As currently, the study area is characterized by vast expansion of parking surfaces and buildings that are vacant with no overall design cohesiveness. The Monroe Ward plan aims to provide a plan for enhancing the overall appeal and Physical characteristics of the neighborhood.

This document is divided into two parts. The first portion is comprised of an assessment of existing conditions and a summary of the assets and liabilities for the study area. The existing conditions include a brief description of the area's history and previous plans, as well as detailed reports on land use and zoning, demographics, current building uses, property ownership, crime, surrounding influences, urban design and transportation. The second section covers the team's recommendations for future development in Monroe Ward. It includes goals, objectives, plan descriptions and implementation strategies. The study area is located at the foot of Oregon Hill, just east of VCU and generally bound by Belvidere, Broad, 5th and Canal Street.

HISTORY

Once called as the “Old gateway to downtown Richmond”, Monroe Ward, an 89-acre area of downtown Richmond, was created in 1803, after the city of Richmond was divided into Wards. During its golden years, Monroe Ward was one of the city’s oldest and most varied districts. The neighborhood’s initial build-up as a middle-class residential neighborhood is exemplified by its earliest (1814) surviving dwelling. In the years after the fall of the Confederacy, due to the influx of population to the area, the density of the district increased. Accordingly, in order to provide housing for the new population, on the side streets larger house sites were sub-divided to create smaller dwellings and tenant properties. Most of the new developments were in the Italianate style. Beginning in the 1910s, due to the automobile and the city's new streetcar suburbs, the aging of the residential stock and commercialism, homeowners were drawn west and north of Monroe Ward. Consequently the Monroe Ward's structures were sacrificed for early services such as gas stations. Front porches were replaced with storefronts and commercial entries; Greek and Italianate houses were modified to create restaurants or shops whose merchandise was advertised in block storefronts. Consequently, small professional offices also relocated to the neighborhood's abandoned dwellings. Along the 100 block of East Cary Street, a concentration of design related professions relocated to the area after the arrival of the Dietz Press in a glamorous Gothic style structure at the center of the block. Monroe Ward was home to numerous

Figure 2: Sanborn Map Depicting the Monroe Ward Neighborhood in 1864 (Source: http://www.mdgorman.com/Maps/official_records_map.htm)
design, advertising and printing businesses. The 00 block of East Main Street had the highest institutional buildings. Franklin Street was bordered by intricately detailed two and three story row houses, stately townhouses, notably occupied by retail and commercial activities with a concentration of furniture businesses. Though arrival of these thriving trades resulted in changes to Monroe Ward’s historic fabric, their presence was arguably responsible for preservation and stabilization of core blocks in the district. In the 1920s, Second Street became a heavily traveled major approach road to the Lee Bridge, and Belvidere was designated U.S. Highway 1 to serve tourist and truck traffic from Maine to Miami. Finally in the 1970s, the RMA Downtown Expressway demolished the residential characteristics of the neighborhood.

Previous Plans

It is important to be aware of previous revitalization attempts because they provide insight into other visions for the area as well as examples of what has worked and has failed in the past. The most recent attempts to plan for development in Monroe Ward occurs in the 2002 Monroe Ward survey and study by Cox & Associates and the 2007 Draft Downtown Master plan.

Monroe Ward Survey and Study

In the 2002 Monroe Ward survey and study done by Cox & Associates, emphasis has been placed on the area surrounding the Franklin and Main St. corridors as a core for Monroe Ward. The plan calls for adaptation of a District Overlay Ordinance and a mixed-use in the infill structure including office, residential, parking, and related commercial activities. Renovation and adaptive reuse of the existing structures features prominently in this plan. Infill development is encouraged and should complement existing structures.

2007 Draft Downtown Master Plan: The 2007 Draft Downtown Master Plan’s strategy was the same as the Monroe ward 2002 plan by Cox & Associates; it prioritizes appropriate and continuous infill development especially in the vacant properties and parking lots. Infill development will connect with one another to create a continuous block of residential and commercial uses. Much of this infill will surround large parking lots, so that parking is present but hidden from view. This plan further accommodates commuters by including three additional parking decks. To prevent the decks from being obtrusive, the plan calls for blending the parking decks with existing buildings and new infill construction. Finally, the plan calls for the planting of street trees along several of the roads within the study area to make the area more attractive.

VCU Master Plan: 11 acres of the study area is planned in the VCU Master Plan (Figure 3). The area consists of the School of Engineering and Business, a residential structure, a mixed used residential building with stores on the first floor with open space.
**Existing Land Use**

The Land Use Plan indicates the adopted policy for future development by setting the general character, extent, and location of land use types throughout the County. While the Land use indicates the City’s goals for future development, the Zoning Ordinance regulates the current uses, density, height and placements. The analysis of Existing Land Uses and Zoning can help to identify vacant parcels where new and infill development may occur and recognize patterns of successful existing land uses that may serve as a basis for future growth. It also highlights conflicts between land use and zoning. The study area covers approximately 89 acres. Downtown Land Use in 2004 was comprised into nine classifications: Commercial, Duplex (two-family) Industrial, Government, institutional, Multifamily, Office, Single Family and vacant. The neighborhood primarily consists of commercial and office with more of a mix along the North-West side. Residential uses are focused primarily around the North West consisting of both multi-family and duplex dwellings. (See Map2: Monroe Ward Current Land Use). Currently, however, some of the parcels that are designated to Commercial and office are vacant and used as parking lots. This provides significant opportunities for change and future improvement. (See Map3)

The following information has been determined by a visual survey:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Area</th>
<th>Parking Spots</th>
<th>Downtown Parking</th>
<th>Parking Spaces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parking Decks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surface lots</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1425</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1520</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Existing Land Use (Source: student field survey)

There are 1520 parking spaces in Monroe Ward, 94% of which are surface parking. Almost 34% of the surface parking lots in downtown are located in the study area. (See Table 2) However the only parking deck in the Jackson Ward district is not used to its full capacity and a few of the parking lots, especially along Canal Street, are underutilized. In addition, VCU has just finished construction of a 689-space parking deck on Jefferson Street which allows direct westbound access onto the Downtown Expressway. According to the VCU Master Plan, the new VCU facilities occupy 11 acres (12%) of the land that had been primarily a commercial district. (See Figure 3). Located on the 100 block of Franklin Street, the Jefferson Hotel is one of the most significant commercial uses in the area.
ZONING

The Master Plan recommends zoning in the Downtown study area to consist of the three primary districts: Business General, Commercial General, and Residential Office. (See Map 5: Zoning, Monroe Ward Neighborhood) Occupying the largest area within the study area is the General Commercial (B3 and B4). B3 designation is most suitable for uses such as the following uses: Adult care facilities; Adult entertainment establishments; Art galleries; Construction equipment sales; banks and loan offices; catering businesses; grocery stores and convenient stores; dwelling units above the floor area; service businesses. The floor Area Ration shall not exceed 2.0 in B-3 and 6.0 in B-4 zones.

Current Land Use and Zoning & Master plan

The Richmond Master Plan (November 2000) recommends different types of mixed uses within the study area: Commercial, Residential and Office. A comparison of the Richmond Master Plan (November 2000) with the existing land uses in Monroe Ward reveals a few discrepancies. While The Master Plan recommends mixed-use for the large portion of the southern part of the study area, to include office and residential uses, much of this area is currently used as surface parking. Furthermore, there is a conflict between the current zoning and the master plan recommendations. While the Master Plan recommends Mixed-use Residential for south western part of the study area, some of those parcels is currently zoned M-1 which does not allow a mix of these land uses. These parcels, however, are zoned R63 in the new Downtown Master Plan 2007. Any future development, before the Downtown Master Plan gets implemented, following the Master Plan recommendations will require either Special Use Permits or Rezoning.
Map 2: Current Land Use (Source: City of Richmond GIS Data)
Map 3: Surface Parking (Source: City of Richmond GIS Data)
Map 4: Citywide Master Plan Land Use (Source: City of Richmond GIS Data)
Map 5: Citywide Master Plan Zoning (Source: City of Richmond GIS Data)
**Historic Districts**

The inventory of existing historical resources lends important reference for new development in the Specific Plan area. These assets serve as a high standard for contributing to planning, redevelopment and design in downtown. Monroe Ward is recognized for its diverse types of architecturally significant buildings and districts that represent the historic fabric and character of the community. Properties on Main Street to Cary Street, from north to south, and Jefferson Street to 3rd Street, from east to west are listed in the National Register. In addition, 42 properties on the 00 block and 14 on the 200 block of Franklin street are within the Local Historic sites. (See Figure 7)

**Building Conditions**

A building inventory is a useful tool in understanding the current uses and conditions within the study area. Building conditions in Monroe Ward were determined by using the criteria on the City of Champaign, Illinois that the Neighborhood Services Department put forth for the Neighborhood Wellness Survey. The rankings are broken down into four major categories (See below). Grace Street contains most of the poor and deteriorating structures. Almost 16% of the structures on Grace Street are in poor or deteriorating condition. On Main Street, five structures are determined as poor. Also, most second floor units in the majority of office and retail spaces, especially on Main and Cary streets are vacant. Overall the Monroe Ward neighborhood contains a good amount of building in fair or good Condition. (See map 6) As mentioned before in the next year, 10% of new structures in the neighborhood will be VCU facilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOOD</th>
<th>FAIR</th>
<th>POOR</th>
<th>DETERIORATED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• No structural problems</td>
<td>• Minor violations</td>
<td>• Some structural problems with load bearing components</td>
<td>• Numerous and severe structural problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No maintenance related problems</td>
<td>• Minor structural violations associated with building components</td>
<td>• Numerous or serious violations</td>
<td>• Excessive lack of maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Very few or no minor violations observed</td>
<td>• No structural problems associated with load bearing Components</td>
<td>• Overall lack of maintenance</td>
<td>• Excessive lack of maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Excessive peeling paint</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Neighborhood Wellness Survey, City of Champaign, Illinois, the Neighborhood Services Department
Example of a deteriorated building, numerous and severe structural problems, Excessive lack of maintenance

Example of poor building condition: Some structural problems with load bearing components, numerous or serious violations, Overall lack of maintenance

Example of a good Building: No structural problems, no maintenance related problems, very few or no minor violations observed

Example of fair building condition: Minor violations No structural problems associated with load bearing Components, Excessive peeling paint

Figure 8: Building Conditions (Source: Student field survey)
Map 7: Building Conditions (Source: City of Richmond GIS Data)
PROPERT VALUES

According to the City GIS data in 2008, the total asset value of properties in Monroe Ward neighborhood, including structures, ranges from $200,000 to $32,000,000. Value assessment for almost 83% of properties is under $1,000,000 and total asset value of surface parking lots within the area is $135,824,200. Consequently, 23 out of 121 parking lots have over $1,000,000 value. The building to land value is provided in Table 3 as an indicator of the ability to convert an area to another use. A high building to land ratio would indicate that it will be more difficult to convert a property, and a lower ratio would indicate that it might be easier. The highest building to land value ratio is 22 for Virginia Commonwealth University’s new facilities. (See the map 9)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building to Land Value</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 1 and 3</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 3 and 8</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Building to Land Value (Source: City of Richmond, Office of Property Assessment)

TRANSPORTATION

Traffic in Monroe Ward boasts a low level of congestion. The Downtown Expressway along Canal Street reduces traffic congestion on Main and Cary Streets. It also provides excellent access to the downtown from Byrd Street off-ramp. In 2006, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) estimated the daily traffic volume for several major Streets and intersections in the study area. According to this data, over 121,200 users drive within Monroe Ward on a daily basis. In comparison to some other routes, except for the Belvidere corridor, the traffic volume in Monroe Ward is slow (See Table 4). From 2002 to 2006, the traffic volume decreased in Belvidere, Adam, 2nd, 5th, Franklin and Cary. Main, Grace, Canal, 3rd and 4th streets, however experienced an increase in traffic volume. Consequently Daily traffic increased by 32% on Canal Street. Due to the VCU new facilities in the area the of traffic count especially on Main, Cary, Adam and Belvidere will raise in the next two years.

Circulation

A high-quality transportation network is essential to the circulation within and to and from the district. Traffic within Monroe Ward is almost comprised of motor vehicle traffic. This traffic enters and exits the area via Main, Franklin and Cary Streets, as well as Adam, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th. The Streets are designed in a grid pattern, making the area easily accessible from surrounding districts. However, because some streets are one-way, movement within the study area is hindered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>St. Name</th>
<th>Start-End</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belvider</td>
<td>2nd - Franklin</td>
<td>33000</td>
<td>28000</td>
<td>-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belvider</td>
<td>Franklin-Broad</td>
<td>44000</td>
<td>35000</td>
<td>-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>Canal-Leigh</td>
<td>2100</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>-19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Caty-Clay</td>
<td>5300</td>
<td>4800</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Canal-I95</td>
<td>4300</td>
<td>4900</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>canal-I95</td>
<td>11000</td>
<td>9300</td>
<td>-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>Belvidere-9th</td>
<td>5600</td>
<td>5400</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin</td>
<td>Belvidere-9th</td>
<td>9500</td>
<td>7500</td>
<td>-21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main</td>
<td>Belvidere-8th</td>
<td>9600</td>
<td>9900</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cary</td>
<td>Belvidere-9th</td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>7700</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal</td>
<td>Belvidere-9th</td>
<td>4100</td>
<td>5400</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>136500</td>
<td>119600</td>
<td>-12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Traffic Count (Source: VDOT, Daily Traffic Volume 2002 & 2006 Estimates)
Map 9: Building to Land Value (Source: City of Richmond GIS Data)
Bus Routes
The GRTC Transit System is responsible for public transit including bus transportation in the City of Richmond. Currently, GRTC has 9 bus routes that cover almost all the area. Map 1 in the Appendix illustrates bus routes in Monroe Ward.

Modes of transportation to work
Other modes of transportation include pedestrian, bicycle and mass transit. Currently, there is very little bicycle traffic within the study area. Poorly maintained sidewalks and lack of crosswalks perpetuate this problem. Monroe Ward does have several parking lots that create pedestrian traffic moving into the City Central area in peak hours, however, there is almost no foot traffic in the area itself. The underlying reason is lack of the residential and services such as units in the area.

COMMUNITY PROFILE & HOUSING

The overall decrease in population that occurred in Richmond from 1990 to 2000 was distributed by age. As the baby boomer generation entered or moved out of some age groups, some census tracts experienced increase or decreased in total population by age. Census tract 305, which the study area is a part of, experienced an increase of 65% in the fewer than 19 age group. As of 2000, the population of the study area was 1944 almost half of which was in the 25-35 age group. In the next two years, according to the VCU Master Plan, two new residential facilities to house 800 Students will open in the Monroe Ward in the next two years neighborhood, which will increase population in the 20-35 group. Almost 7 out of 10 males in the labor force in the neighborhood are employed. This number decreases to 6 for females in the labor force. The overall unemployment rate among females is 7% more than males.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Pop</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 18</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-35</td>
<td>1046</td>
<td>53.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-65</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>30.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 65</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>12.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Population 2000 (Source: US decennial Census)

Chart 1: Employment Status 2000 (Source: Census 2000)

Growth of Housing Units by Population
The total number of housing units in Monroe Ward increased by 16% from 2000 to 2006, at the same time population grew to 18%. Considering the nearly less than 10% residential vacancy rate in 2000, there has not been enough residential development taken place in the area. In 2000, 98% of the housing units were renter occupied.
CRIME

Some of the area’s poor image is related to the perception of higher than average crime; crime risk tends to decrease the walkability of the area. The most popular types of crimes reported are categorized as “Other.” These “Other” crimes may include vandalism, graffiti, and trespassing; essentially these are non-violent crimes. (See Appendix: Other Crime Table) Theft is the 2nd most prevalent type of crime and makes up 19% of reported crimes within the district. Monroe Ward has the highest number of “other” crimes and theft reported than its surrounded neighborhoods. According to Richmond’s Police department, the number of crimes in Monroe Ward has risen over the last year. Figure 5 illustrates the total number of crimes by year reported to the Richmond Police Department for Monroe Ward Neighborhood.

URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS

The purpose of the Urban Design Analysis is to identify the already important elements of an area in order to ensure that they are maintained and strengthened in the public consciousness.

1-Linkages and Continuity

Linkages are the paths, urban spaces and views that connect objects, features and destinations within neighborhood, district and the city. They should reinforce and enhance the pedestrian system, and connect destinations.

- Major paths and street pattern

Identifying and reinforcing a street hierarchy can help establish priorities and define the type, scale, and preferred location of future development. The study area is built on a grid street pattern within which roles or functions of streets vary and allows for the continuity in the neighborhood. The most important or “primary” streets in the neighborhood are as the following:

Belvidere Street is an important image street for Downtown and the City as a whole, and provides several gateways into the study area especially through the Virginia Commonwealth University’s new structures.

Franklin Street is the setting for a number of distinctive public, institutional, residential and hotel uses. Franklin Street also links Capitol Square to Virginia Commonwealth University.
through the study area. The 1997 Plan recommended conversion to two-way traffic.

**Grace Street** Acts as a frontage street between the Capitol and 1st Street. The 1997 Plan recommended that the street be converted to two-way.

**Main Street** is a primarily Downtown office location and hub of pedestrian activity. It also provides an important linkage with and through Monroe Ward.

**5th Street** is one of the most important north-south streets in Downtown, and is a prime pedestrian and vehicular linkage between the convention and entertainment areas in the City Center and the Canal Corridor and riverfront. It serves as the major gateway to Downtown from the I-95 / I-64 interchange.

**2-Street Walls (Streetscape)**

Street walls are the facades of buildings along the street sidewalks. They are an important catalysts and models for future downtown redevelopment; it outlines the physical limits of the public realm and contributes to the enclosure of the public street. A good street wall would help make the pedestrian feel comfortable on the street or sidewalk.

Other elements, such as building materials, building height and architectural details at the sidewalk are important considerations in designing buildings along downtown streets. In Monroe Ward, street walls are not pedestrian oriented; in addition to the numerous blank walls, surface parking lots attribute to the dead space and are not appealing to pedestrians. Below is an example of a blind street wall on 2nd street (Figure 9).

**Street Furniture**

Street furniture is not defined strongly in Monroe Ward; lack of elements such as street trees, signage, street lights as well as public art causes the neighborhood to lose its vibrancy and create non pedestrian oriented streets on Grace and Main Street. A good example of street trees can be seen on Franklin Street (Figure 10). Current lighting placed in Monroe Ward is oriented toward automobile travel. The cobra head lighting, while providing illumination for the roadway, is not adequate for pedestrian activity. (Figure 12)

**Material and Color**

Many buildings are built with historical materials such as wood, brick or terra cotta; most of the buildings have walls...
with brick with orange and copper tones. In the newly constructed Office/Government buildings, the material changes to contemporary materials like concrete, metal reflective glass wide openings is one of the characteristics of such structures.

- **Skyline:**
The skyline is dominated by the Jefferson Hotel and tall residential apartment buildings on the west and tall office/government buildings on the east. Due to the various number of vacant lands, the skyline is broken from any view on the site.

- **Signage:**
Directional, location and identity signage, if appropriately designed will inform and establish a sense of place without adding clutter. Businesses and advertising signs in Monroe Ward are not identified in the neighborhood. Signs can be designed and located to form a better visual impression.

**3-Nodes and Gateways**
Nodes are readily recognizable clusters of like or similar uses or a collection of different uses clearly differentiated from its surroundings. In the Monroe Ward neighborhood there are identifiable nodes: the VCU Engineering Building, the residential apartments on Franklin Street and the row of two story structures with offices on the first floor Main St.

**4-Public Realm and landscaping**
Public places, landscaping and screening benefit the overall appearance of creating a more attractive, healthier and cleaner environment. None of the surface parking lots in Monroe Ward are screened from the pedestrian view. Furthermore, except for the new and under construction VCU open spaces in between its facilities, and the Library Park, currently, there is no attractive and successful public outdoor place in Monroe Ward. Presently the Library Park is not used by residents however it can become one of neighborhood’s public areas. Another important and unique feature that provides green space is Monroe Park which borders the neighborhood to the west.

**5-Building Mass and Scale**
Jefferson Hotel with its stunning six-story Beaux Arts building is the bulkiest structure in the neighborhood, occupying almost one block. Some other bulky structures include the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Library of Richmond, a parking deck and an office building located pass 1st street on Franklin and Main streets. Also there e are numerous four to eight story apartment buildings on the Franklin street.

![Figure 13: Good Example of Landscaping on Franklin & Belvidere St](image1)

![Figure 14: Lack of street furniture, Franklin St.](image2)

![Figure 15: Open space, VCU New Facilities (source: VCU Master plan)](image3)
1- Exposure in space: the lack of a good street wall: non-screened parking lot, no landscaping and street furniture

2&3 - Non continuous skyline

4- A good Example of landscaping and streetscape

5- Parking lots on the corner of intersection create a sense of exposure
SURROUNDING INFLUENCES

Understanding the external influences and dynamics, which exist beyond Monroe Ward’s boundaries is essential to the planning process and must be considered when making recommendations for uses. Neighborhoods that immediately border the study area are Gamble Hill, Virginia Commonwealth University, City Center and the Jackson Ward.

Virginia Commonwealth University located to the west of Monroe Ward along Belvidere, Broad, Harrison and the Downtown Expressway. The area consists of several uses including: Institutional residential and commercial. Monroe Park is a major focal point of the district and consists of seven acres surrounded by mid rise and signature buildings. This vibrant neighborhood provides a stable young population base for potential residential and businesses locating within Monroe Ward. Grace Street is mentioned as the future area of development in the VCU 2020 Master Plan.

Jackson Ward is located northwest and southwest from the study area. Since a decade ago the area has experienced gentrification and has transformed into a vibrant mixed-use district. The number and variety of already established restaurants and entertainment options could impede similar types of businesses from locating within the study area. However, by utilizing the already established businesses within Shockoe Bottom and Shockoe Slip, Monroe Ward could continue the trend and help to create a regional entertainment destination and perpetuate the economy of scale, which already exists within the area.

City Center is located between 5 and 7th Streets, along Leigh and Canal Streets. This district contains the City Hall, the new Federal Courts Building and Capitol Square, located on the eastern side of this neighborhood. With two major facilities, the Richmond Coliseum and the Greater Richmond Convention Center, City Center is the Municipal anchor of the region. In addition, City Center employees are a large, natural source of support for retail and eating/drinking businesses during and after the work day. The study area has the opportunity to provide businesses and services that complement the already established businesses in the VCU neighborhood.

Gambles Hill is situated along the James River in the southern part of the study area and is bounded by the James River, Belvidere, Canal and 9th Street. It commands a magnificent panoramic view of the James River with a great access to James River through 2nd Street.
SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is an important first step in helping a community defines its vision and goals. In many cases, a particular attribute can be both a weakness and an opportunity at the same time.

Weaknesses

1. Current Industrial zoning along Canal Street is incompatible with mixed-use development.
2. 98% of the household are renters.
3. CrimeLevel is higher than surrounding neighborhoods.
4. Increased congestion in the VCU Monroe Campus could increase traffic through the area during peak rush hours.
5. A lack of trees to provide a green neighborhood and canopy.

Threats

1. 16% of existing buildings are considered to be in "poor" or "deteriorated" condition.
2. High vacancy rate makes area feel isolated and visitors feel vulnerable and exposed.
3. Parcels in very visible and important locations are used as surface Parking.
4. High level of crimes categorized as “other”, such as vandalism.
5. Existing retail and commercial business are competition for new businesses in Jackson Ward and Shockoe bottom.
6. Few pedestrian friendly areas, lack of bicycle paths, poorly maintained sidewalks.
7. Poor condition of building that are listed in the Local Historic sites.
8. No Parks or green spaces.

Strengths

1. Current B5 zoning allows for Mixed-Use development.
2. Some mixture of uses already exists, especially on Franklin and Broad Street corridor.
3. Large percentage of "good" and "fair" buildings.
4. The Jefferson Hotel as one of the attractions of the Neighborhood.
5. Large portion of the neighborhood is listed in the national or city historic districts.
7. Immediately accessible transportation network which includes direct exits from interstates 64 and the Downtown Expressway.
8. Varied urban views to the downtown.
9. Large number of structures with a low building to land value.
10. Monroe Park is located across from the study area.
11. Proximity to retail, commercial, and entertainment options.
12. Proximity to the James River.
13. 50% of the population is between 20 and 35.
14. New student population in VCU dormitories.

Opportunities

1. Large number of potential residents working and going to school Downtown and in the surrounding neighborhoods.
2. Overflow parking lots and decks will bring people into Monroe Ward.
3. Lack of retail and commercial competition Downtown is an opportunity for Monroe Ward to fill the void.
4. Very little traffic congestion.
5. VCU new facilities will contribute to the vibrancy in the Neighborhood and bring a considerable population of young people to the area.
6. Large potential for Infill Development especially where surface parking is.
7. Master Plan recommends more of the study area as Mixed-Use development.
8. The existing Library Park that can be used as a public space for residents, downtown workers and library users.
VISION STATEMENT

The Monroe Ward neighborhood has preserved the historical character and integrity of a historic mixed use neighborhood. Redevelopment occurs in appropriate areas and reflects the historical nature and retail/residential character of the neighborhood. Monroe Ward will address the needs of a diverse pedestrian oriented community and provide safe and attractive open spaces. It will provide a full spectrum of personal and community services such as retail/offices uses that cater to a variety of populations, from college students to young and middle income professionals.

After analyzing the existing conditions of Monroe Ward and its surrounding neighborhoods, goals, objectives, and strategies were developed to provide community organizations and the City of Richmond recommendations for improving the corridor. Because the plan emphasizes urban design improvements, more detailed recommendations will be devoted towards the design category.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal I: Vibrant and diverse neighborhood-oriented commercial, office and multifamily residential
Goal II: Neighborhood parks and open space areas that enhance the vibrancy of the neighborhood
Goal III: Ensure preservation of the historic character of the community

Goal IV: Provide market rate housing and promote an array of housing opportunities that will attract owner-occupied and long-term renter-occupied households in the neighborhood
Goal V: Ensure a safe and efficient circulation system to accommodate the movement of people and the vehicular traffic
Goal VI: Enhance Neighborhood’s vibrancy and dynamic character of Monroe Ward through a cohesive design and aesthetic unity
Goal VII: Achieve a sustainable healthy, vibrant environment in the neighborhood

Outlined in the plan are key objectives which can help the Monroe Ward neighborhood and the residents of the Community to achieve these goals:

1- Change the Zoning to the form based code zoning
2- Create a park in front of the Jefferson hotel and open space and plazas in the neighborhood
3- Ensure the availability of Market rate housing to accommodate both renter and owners.
4- Ensure preservation of the historic buildings as well as the local historic sites
5- Grace shall function as a two-way street and
6- Public art and gateways will be leveraged to enhance the visual identity of the neighborhood. Also Crime Prevention through Environmental Design techniques shall be practiced.
7- Encourage the new construction to acquire the LEED certificate
Objective 1.1: A pedestrian orientated dense district with a mix of Office, Commercial, and Residential Uses in each building
The highest intensity, highest value development in the region should be established within 12 blocks of the rectangle formed by 2nd, Canal, Grace and 5th streets, which functions as a downtown activity center. It has high intensity employment, civic, retailing and entertainment centers with a complementary mix of commercial and high density residential. Some uses encouraged in the district include mid & high-rise office; hotels; major cultural and entertainment; regional & corporate offices, retail, grocery stores and services. Office uses, including, but not limited to, general and professional offices, medical and dental offices, banks and financial institutions, automatic teller machines, real estate offices, travel agencies, and offices of political, professional, or civic organizations or, associations. The area will not encourage uses that are auto orientated or uses that attract interstate traffic. The Franklin Street corridor is the heart of the neighborhood, providing mixed uses such as residential and offices.

Objective 1.2: A pedestrian orientated, moderately dense live-work district with a mix of residential uses and commercial uses to encourage energetic street life
Village Center, a mixed-use multifamily residential district, bounded by 2nd and Grace, Madison and Adams, is adjacent to the Office center district and functions as a live-work district. Buildings have small retail and commercial uses at the street level with residential uses above to give business owners the opportunity to live above or near their business. This will serve to increase the resident base for local businesses. The area captures the commuter consumer for all retail enterprises.

Objective 1.3: A commercial corridor with a mix of residential uses and commercial uses to encourage energetic street life
Expansion of the number and variety of businesses such as restaurants and shops along Main Street will help to increase the overall day and night activity in the neighborhood. Also, this Corridor acts as a buffer between VCU facilities and adjacent mixed uses. Additional residential development along the commercial corridor should also be included within mixed-use developments as it will serve to increase resident base for local businesses, and create additional housing options within the neighborhood.

Objective 1.4: A Commercial District with a mix of both high and low density residential uses
Commercial Center which borders the VCU and the Village Center is a mixed-use residential district with emphasis on commercial uses. Located along Belvidere Street, it provides a good opportunity to attract commuters to and from I-95. Some recommended uses in this area include: recreational indoor facilities, hotels, day care centers; major cultural and entertainment.

**Figure 17: Land Use Concept**
IMPLEMENTATION:

Implementation 1.1: Harmonious and orderly change and development of urban areas should be enabled through establishing form-based codes to accommodate transitions between densities and building types. The Code regulates land development and set careful and clear controls on building form. The following two zones are identified to be coded:
1. Mixed Used with emphasis on Commercial
2. High density Mixed Used with emphasis on Retail & Office
3. Mixed Used Medium Density

City of Richmond should hire a consultant firm to design a code for each of the above districts. Furthermore, Monroe Ward Neighborhood Association should cooperate with the City of Richmond Commission to offer workshops and educate and train architects and residents regarding the form based zoning.

Implementation 2.2: The City of Richmond’s Department of Economic Development should conduct a market study to determine feasible and marketable uses for the Main Street Commercial Corridor.

Goal II: Neighborhood Parks and Open Space Areas That Enhance the Vibrancy of the Neighborhood

Objective 3.1: Create the Jefferson Park and the 2nd St. plaza to provide ample and adequately distributed areas both for active and passive outdoor activities.

Creating high-quality public open space is a key to the success of Monroe Ward’s Neighborhood Plan. A Neighborhood park and open space provides a place for the community’s informal gatherings and neighborhood events, as well as appropriate levels and types of both active and passive recreation. It may include such features as shaded paths, open space and public arts. A new neighborhood park should be established in the block adjacent to Jefferson hotel on Main Street. This signature public space should be designed to serve both local and visitor needs and uses as well as act a buffer between the new extension of Monroe Ward campus and the rest of the neighborhood. In addition to the buffer park on the corner of Main and Jefferson, a plaza should be considered at the corner of Canal and 2nd street. This open space would act as one of the gateways to the neighborhood.

Objective 3.2: To provide a system of interconnected open space and green links

During the Downtown Master Plan meeting for Monroe Ward neighborhood, resident’s comments were mainly focused on the pedestrian and green streets. This presents a need for better use of rights-of-way. A network of trees could provide the community with a connective green framework within the public right-of-way and within adjacent private property. This would provide shade, and help to unify blocks and create visual interest that will add to the vibrancy of the neighbourhood. All of the Monroe Ward streets should be considered for street improvements. Recommendations include increased street trees along Grace, Main, Cary and Canal Streets a series of connecting footpaths that link Jefferson Community Park, urban center, and two other district together. These paths extend beyond the boundaries of the Monroe Ward Area to connect the neighborhood to nearby attractions, such as Monroe Park, Jackson ward, City Center and VCU.
IMPLEMENTATION:

**Implementation 2.1:** The Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities should develop a plan to plant/increase street trees along the major roads such as Grace, Franklin, Main and Cary. The same department, to maintain trees in public rights-of-way, should be fully funded. In the absence of funding the department, the City should assist residents in a self-help program including:
- General care and maintenance instructions
- Pest and disease identification and treatment

**Implementation 2.2:** City of Richmond should acquire land for the development of the Jefferson Park and the 2nd street plaza. Parks should be highly visible from neighborhood streets and surrounding homes and should be well-lit at night. Once the two parks are established the Richmond public arts commission should work to coordinate displays of public art located throughout them.

**Implementation 2.3:** The Richmond public arts commission should work to coordinate displays of public art located throughout the park and 2nd Street plaza.

**Objective 3.1:** Maintain the character of historic buildings and neighborhood

An increase in awareness of Monroe Ward’s unique community character, cultural resources and protection of historical buildings would retain architectural integrity of the neighborhood. All buildings including those that are not even listed in the local register should require approval of the Architectural Review board for exterior changes protection and enhancement of the city’s image corridors conveys.

**Objective 3.2:** Ensure rehabilitation and new construction within the district complements the historic framework

Protection and enhancement of the city’s historic image conveys a positive impression of the city, thus encourage visitation and investment. To the greatest extent possible,
existing structures should be rehabilitated or adaptively reused. In order to enhance the historic streetscape of historic districts, rehabilitation and new construction within the district should complement and respect the scale historic framework. The most rehabilitation efforts should be considered on Franklin Street

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

**Implementation 3.1:** The Monroe Ward News website should be used as a tool to educate public about the historic features of the neighborhood.

**Implementation 3.2:** Individual property owners, community development corporations and private developers should be the primary implementers of rehabilitation activity. The city should support public/private partnerships that provides assistance for the rehabilitation of historic buildings, property improvement and maintenance.

**Implementation 3.3:** The community should adopt the Monroe Ward Redevelopment Design Guidelines as the measure of what constitutes “compatible” with the existing neighborhood. This plan should use the similar appropriate building use, building placement and lot size, approach used in the “Old Manchester Redevelopment Design Guidelines”; elements such as building encroachment, parking and building height should be adopted from this document.

**Implementation 3.4:** The City should ensure that only high quality rehabilitation occurs in Monroe Ward. Incentives must be provided to those interested in renovating property. When possible, financial assistance should also be made available, including tax credits, low-interest loans and grants for closing costs and emergency repairs.

**Objective 4.1:** Ensure the availability of quality market-rate owner-and renter-occupied housing for moderate-income families

Development of market-rate housing for families of modest or moderate incomes (80 - 120% of median) is encouraged. Also, development of income producing units such as owner-occupied duplexes with rental or work units that foster creativity and economic development is encouraged. These types of housing units provide affordable living and workspace in a community setting.

**Objective 4.2:** Encourage the rehabilitation and preservation of the existing residential units

Rehabilitation must be considered as the one of the main objectives. Almost 34% of housing stock was built before 1939 with materials that are now in need of major repair. Good construction quality must be present in housing of any type. The attractive and rehabilitated units instill a sense of pride among owners, which in turn inspires property maintenance and a strong sense of community.

![Figure 20: Live work Units, Gaithersburg MD (Source: Cool Town Studios.com)](image-url)
IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation 4.2: City of Richmond should promote programs available to homeowners for residential property improvements, such as the Homeowner Grant Program in Arlington County and the Residential Paint Program. In Hallandale Beach, Florida, free paint is available to homeowners for the exterior of a house.

Implementation 4.3: City if Richmond should develop and supplement existing programs and policies into an overall market-rate housing policy that will compensate for gaps in what the free housing market can provide. Also the City ought to identify Community Development Corporations to partner with private developers to develop housing designed and priced for specific demographic ranges desired by the community.

Implementation 4.1: City of Richmond should work with banks, appraisers, and realtors to provide more reliable access to loans and capital for innovative, moderate-priced housing. In addition, the City should follow the same action that the City of Seattle took by establishing upper price caps on “Equity Partners” program to encourage housing units costing no more than 120% of the FHA maximum home sale price, or an amount deemed, after study to cover the needs of moderate income families.

GOAL V: ENSURE A SAFE AND EFFICIENT CIRCULATION SYSTEM TO ACCOMMODATE THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND THE VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

Objective 5.1: Two-way streets and traffic calming measures facilitate navigation and safe, efficient circulation.

To provide the community with resources to reduce speeding will lead to less traffic volume, would also lead to less traffic volume and would thus further facilitate traffic flow and navigation. Making Grace a two-way street is a good measure to calm the traffic and to allow traffic to move in both directions through Northeast of the study area. It also allows automobile travelers more time to take in the storefronts and parks within the neighborhood. There is no need to change the traffic pattern on Main and Cary Streets since they work well together and have a higher traffic volume than Grace. Reducing the speed limit near VCU’s new facilities will provide another measure to calm the traffic in the neighborhood. Cobblestone crosswalks on Franklin and Main Streets at the intersections of 2nd and Adam will provide further traffic calming measures and well defined pedestrian crosswalks. Bump-outs along the curbs at the intersections of Adams and Cary as well as 2nd and Canal Streets provides extra traffic calming measures and facilitates on-street parking schemes.

Objective 5.2: Provide a circulation system that includes vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

A continuous marked bike lane along Main and Cary Street provides travel lanes for bicyclists heading north-east and south-west. These bicycle lanes provide a travel route for bicyclists within the neighborhood and also are practical for
bicyclists traveling to or from the surrounding neighborhoods, as Main, Cary and Franklin Street to connect Monroe Park to the Central office district and VCU campus. Also continuous and appropriately marked crosswalks, especially on the intersection of Belvidere with Grace, Franklin, Main, Cary and Canal would provide better coordination and minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. Existing sidewalks should be widened and paths improved to allow for convenient and safe linkages to surrounding neighborhoods and employment centers. Bike racks should be provided for all new buildings and for existing buildings undergoing renovation at a rate of at least one bicycle space for every 20 required automobile spaces. Bicycle parking shall be located within easy access from the street.

**Objective 5.3**: The number of cars brought to the extension of Monroe Park-Campus each day should be decreased.

The effects of automobile traffic on congestion and parking supply in the neighborhoods surrounding VCU campus is a major concern of local residents, especially after the completion of all buildings in the new extension of VCU campus in Monroe Ward. The large number of VCU pedestrians and bicyclists also conflicts with the auto traffic in Monroe Ward. In order to lessen the excessive trips to the neighborhood, the number of cars brought to the new extension of Monroe Park campus should be reduced. VCU student should only be allowed to use VCU parking facility adjacent to the business building.

**Objective 5.4**: Adequate parking is provided on-street as well as in strategically located and designed off-street parking areas.

The current parking in Monroe Ward is taking place on 38% of land in form of surface parking. Most of surface parking lots in the neighborhood have been identified for new construction or green space/plaza. In addition to the limited surface parking that will be offered within some blocks, a parking deck will be built in each zone. A structured parking resource is needed to accommodate expected infill development in the area. Ground floor retail or office along a commercial street is necessary for any parking structure that might be constructed in the Downtown Core. This will facilitate vehicular travel to the Monroe Ward neighborhood while also encouraging pedestrian travel. This plan accommodates commuters by four additional parking decks in Monroe ward (see Map 11). To prevent the decks from being obtrusive, the plan calls for blending the parking decks with existing buildings and new infill construction. On-street parking also offers convenient parking options within the neighborhood. The use of shared parking facilities optimizes use of parking spaces over the course of a day. A shared pairing program shall be offered for commercial, office and retail uses in the neighborhood especially commercial uses along main and 2nd street corridors.

Figure 22: An example of an infill parking structure that accommodates ground floor retail along the street. Ground floor retail along a commercial street is necessary for any parking structure that might be constructed in the Downtown Core.
Objective 5.5: Encourage, promote and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities

The use of design features such as perpendicular ramps allow individuals with disabilities to make the transition from street grade to the raised sidewalk. This improves the accessibility for individuals with disabilities in the neighborhood. Current ramps on Grace, Main, Franklin and Canal streets should be improved. Each ramp must have a landing at the top and bottom. The maximum ramp slope in the right-of-way is 1:12 with the minimum width of 4’ per current City standards. Each landing should be at least 4’ long and as wide as the ramp.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation 5.1: The City should be urged to make completion of sidewalks and ramps a priority on the streets that don’t currently have them.

Implementation 5.2: City of Richmond Department of Transportation shall take action to address neighborhood traffic concerns through a community-based program. The City of San Francisco Department of Transportation took the similar approach through creating a Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP).

Implementation 5.3: The Richmond Department of Public Works should change the traffic patterns in Monroe Ward so that Grace becomes a two-way street. Cobblestones, crosswalks and bump-outs should be installed. (See also the public art objective of the Urban design goal of this plan) The same department should also provide speed feedback signs and “Slow down” warning signs along Canal Street. The Richmond Department of Public Works should work in conjunction with the GRTC Transit System to install a bus bulb on Main, Franklin and Cary Streets between Foushee and 1st Streets.

Implementation 5.4: The City of Richmond should construct a parking deck on the following parcels:

1- The block bounded by Franklin, Foushee, Adams and Main
2- The block at the intersection of 5th and Canal Streets
3- The center of the block located across from Linden Row Inn on Main Street
4- On Grace between Madison and Monroe

The Richmond Department of Public Works should designate on-street parking spaces on all streets within Monroe Ward.

Implementation 5.4: The City of Richmond, Virginia Commonwealth University and the Virginia Department of Transportation to minimize University destined traffic on the new extension of Monroe campus. (Campus shuttles from the old business building to the business building system, safe pedestrian connections, parking fees, etc.) Also in order to lessen the traffic, VCU should adopt a policy that restricts freshmen from bringing a car to the campus.
area should include identical lighting design. The B-12 pole is the most appropriate lighting to create a pedestrian-friendly environment. Figure 26 gives examples of typical street front lighting. Additionally, well-marked crosswalks with brick paving and pedestrian refuge medians would increase the visibility that lead to better circulation throughout the area. Gateways identify the corridor by notifying motorists and pedestrians when they enter and leave the neighborhood. The main gateway to Monroe Ward would be intersections of Main and Grace with Belvidere Street. The proposed plaza on the corner of 2nd and Canal Street is another gateway to the neighborhood. Construction of a signature building on the corners of the above intersection would create strong gateways to the neighborhood and Main Street’s commercial corridor.

The design and style of the signage on the Main Street commercial corridor and throughout the neighborhood should compliment the lighting and street furniture along the corridor to create a cohesive image between the gateway and streetscapes. Aligned landscaping provides a sense of enclosure as well as a shade to pedestrians as they walk throughout the area. In order to prevent blank urban walls created by parking structures, they should be hidden by inside blocks. Horizontal and vertical elements of historic structures should be carried into new building design in all the three zones. respecting the fabric of established zones when undertaking infill developments, plays an important role in creating a seamless urban environment and a well defined skyline.

**Village center:** New developments in the village zone should not exceed more than four stories in height. The entrances of new developments should also face Main Street, with parking placed in the rear of the lot when possible. Also the height of the structures on the Main Street corridor must not exceed 3 stories. Building material and color should complement the overall characteristic of the neighborhood. Brick will be the primary construction material of new developments, with white, grey and red colors.

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Figure 23: This crosswalk is made more visible through the use of alternating colored pavers.

Figure 24: Conceptual Sketch, Main Street Commercial Corridor
**Office Center:** New Developments should not be less than three and no more than 6 stories. Building Materials can include concrete, steel and glass as well as all the material that was used in the village center. The use of steel should be limited to accent horizontal and vertical elements on the façade. Highly reflective glass or similar materials shall not be permitted. The predominant colors include traditional historic colors in the village center and shades of white, crème and gray. A minimum of 70% of the ground floor façade on the Main Street commercial corridor shall be constructed of transparent materials, or otherwise designed to allow pedestrians to view activities inside the building or displays related to those activities.

**Commercial Center:** In order to create a compatible visual relation-ship with village and Office center, structures in this zone—depending on their location—shall follow guidelines for either of the previous zones. Streetscapes on Grace Street should be compatible with mixed uses on the other side of the street and the village center. Buildings should not be more than 4 stories maximum, however structures facing Belvidere shall raise up to 15 stories.

Figure 25: Examples of Street Lights, proposed pedestrian lighting pole: B-12 Pole

Figure 26: Intersection of Grace & Belvidere after the construction of a signature building

![Image](image-url)
Objective 6.2: Promote public art and encourage the development of Attractive and unique characteristics which aid the neighborhood in developing its individual identity.

Public art in the neighborhood can include use of all elements that are visually meaningful and are accessible to the public in different forms. For instance, freestanding sculptures, landscape treatments, murals, fountains, kinetic pieces that move and react to the environment, and artist-designed functional elements such as lighting, paving, street furniture, and bridges are considered forms of public art. (See figure 27) Planning for public art provides a vehicle to involve artists and the broader public in voicing what is most important about Monroe Ward and downtown Richmond overall. Sidewalk and light pole arts shall be installing throughout the neighborhood, especially on the Main street commercial corridor.

A form of public art such as a sculpture or sidewalk art shall be installed in the open space in front of the Richmond Times Dispatch building. Also installing public art projects on bus shelters and in the proposed Jefferson Park shall be encouraged. Map 11 shows the possible locations for public art projects.

Objective 6.3: CPTED implementations enhance the safety of residents and visitors

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CEPTD) principles enhance the safety of the neighborhood by techniques such as creating visual and perceptual borders that promote the community as a well-defined and defensible space. For instance, designing streets, sidewalks, building entrances and neighborhood gateways at major intersections Franklin, Main and Cary streets leading to the area is an important strategy to clearly indicate public routes and discouraging access to private areas with structural elements. Another strategy is adequate lighting in public and private areas to provide a sense of safety and security. Additionally, natural surveillances, including windows on building facades, narrow setbacks of buildings along the street would also provide a sense of safety and security.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Implementation 6.1: The City of Richmond should reinforce the downtown streetscape through incentives for building owners to provide retail frontage, sidewalk amenities, and shading by trees or canopies. Encourage the use of materials and a quality of finish work which reinforces the historic character of the neighborhood as one that is built for beauty and to last. The City should install human scale lighting throughout the neighborhood especially on Franklin and Main street commercial corridor. After the creation of the Monroe Ward Business Association one if its intentions should focus on assisting the City in improving the streetscape along the corridor.
Implementation 6.2: Allocate funding in the Capital Improvements Program for consultant services to prepare detailed construction plans to identify, in coordination with business/property owners, the placement of street trees, furniture, lighting, and sidewalk paving. The construction plans should also include cost estimates for installation of streetscape improvements. The City also should develop special tax assessment districts or tax increment financing to fund additional services and improvements, such as decorative or period lighting and streetscape amenities.

Implementation 6.4: The City of Richmond has to establish a standard maintenance policy for the public right-of-way area between the street curb and the private building frontage on the street. Property owners are responsible for maintaining along their street frontage all sidewalks, street trees, and building fixtures that overhang the sidewalk such as awnings or light fixtures. Maintenance of any vegetative plantings in tree planter areas or in above sidewalk planters shall also be the responsibility of the property or business owner.

Implementation 6.5: The City of Richmond Department of Public Art Commission should assist Monroe Ward Neighborhood Association to create a program which works with professional artist and VCU art students to design and fabricate artwork for public spaces. This program also should offer a design and consulting service for local developers to encourage the incorporation of public art in community development projects. The City also provides a part of the construction cost of public projects for the purchase and installation of art creates incentives for the provision of public art as part of private development projects.

Figure 28: Crosswalk, Washington DC

Figure 29: An example of a great street with authentic translucent storefronts, awnings, special pavement, planters and other amenities including street trees, bike racks and unique trash receptacles
Proposed Infill Buildings, Green Ways & Parks
Map 12: Public art and Gateways

Proposed Location of Public Art & Gateways

- Public Art in form of Sculpture
- Free Standing Art, Sidewalk art
- Gateways

Map 12: Public art and Gateways
Objective 7.1: Enhance and preserve community livability and local environmental quality through the thoughtful integration of the built and natural environments.

Providing residents with access to common-sense solutions and home maintenance/repair information would increase energy efficiency and improve the long-term performance and energy efficiency of homes. For instance a program with a goal of shading coverage for all new surface parking within the neighborhood and for street tree planting would increase the local environmental quality of Monroe Ward. Green Roofs also shall be encouraged wherever possible through out the neighborhood since they create a natural insulation system, absorb rainwater and lower city temperatures. (Figure 30)

Objective 7.3: Encourage sustainable development and redevelopment practices that promote energy efficiency, reduce the consumption of raw materials, and integrate historical preservation principles.

Green buildings put the concepts of sustainability into practice. According to the Smart Communities Network, green buildings call for resource conservation, including energy efficiency, renewable energy and water conservation features, while conceding environmental impacts and reducing waste. Consequently, operation and maintenance costs will be reduced. The LEED Certification process will provide a simple and logical framework for achieving sustainability in Monroe Ward. The adherence to LEED guidelines will help developers in Monroe Ward achieve many of the goals of the green building initiative. The City of Richmond should promote the use of drainage features such as swales and pervious pavement not only to reduce the number of impervious surfaces, but to also ensure proper and environmentally responsible storm water management. The reuse of buildings reduces the need for new construction materials and the associated energy required to manufacture those materials. The following suggestions made by the U.S. Green Building Council should be adhered to by developers involved in the rehabilitation of existing structures in Monroe Ward:

“Consider reuse of existing, previously occupied buildings, including structure, envelope and elements. Remove elements that pose contamination risk to building occupants and upgrade components that would improve energy and water efficiency such as windows, mechanical systems and plumbing fixtures.”

Also the City of Richmond (and Monroe Ward community development Corporation in future) should encourage developers to work with nonprofit groups such as Earth Pledge that transform urban rooftops into gardens. Green-design and construction shall be used for all renovation of

Figure 30: Example of a Green Roof
existing buildings and preserves historic and historic structures in Monroe Ward

**IMPLEMENTATION**

**Implementation 7.1:** The City of Richmond should partner with Community developments groups in downtown and establish guidelines and policies encouraging sustainable development concepts for Monroe Ward. The policy framework should be adapted from the City of Richmond’s *Draft Downtown Master Plan*.

**Implementation 7.3:** The City of Richmond’s Department of Community Development should establish special districts and/or building code standards for the neighborhood that support green building and sustainable urban development.

**Implementation 7.4:** The department of community development should establish city-wide standards for using the LEED Green Building Rating System (A national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings) and ensure through the use of developer incentives that both new and rehabilitation development projects follow the LEED Project Checklist found in the U.S. Green Building Council’s publication “Green Building Rating System For New Construction & Major Renovations”, 2007. The U.S. Green Building Council offers free LEED registration for existing buildings as well as waived fees for LEED Platinum certifications.

**Implementation 7.2:** To encourage the adoption of sustainable building practices by developers in Monroe Ward, the following incentives shall be offered to developers or builders that implement the preceding measures in part or whole:

1. **Fee Waivers:** Developers that build within the neighborhood that implement any sustainability measures that reduce water usage or sewer volume will be eligible for waived fees for water utility hook ups.

2. **Tax Credits:** Any structures that are built or remodeled within Monroe Ward and that implement any sustainability measures that do not fall within the preceding two categories will be eligible for credits toward the reduction of City taxes that will be in direct proportion to the amount spent to implement the sustainability measures.
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<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Implementing Body</th>
<th>Time Horizon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allow the adoption of Form Based Code Zoning</td>
<td>City of Richmond Department of Comm. Dev. (CRDCD)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire lands for Jefferson Park, and 2nd Street plaza</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change land use classification for Jefferson park and 2nd Street plaza to Public and Open Space</td>
<td>City of Richmond Department of Community Development</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install public art in Jefferson Park and the 2nd Street plaza</td>
<td>Richmond Public Arts Commission, City of Richmond</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businesses along Main St corridor in the Village center and the commercial center must have VG and on-street entrances</td>
<td>Downtown Business Association</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt inclusionary housing policy</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a incentive based housing Voucher</td>
<td>Housing Non-Profit, City of Richmond Housing and Neighborhoods Division</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amend the Form Based Code Zoning to require bike racks at certain locations</td>
<td>City of Richmond Department of Community Development</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a community Development Corporation</td>
<td>City of Richmond and Monroe Ward Neighborhood Association, Residents and developers</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Responsible Authority</td>
<td>Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop an incentive based program for developers who follow the CEPTD requirements</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation of street lights, signs, and markers along gateways</td>
<td>Richmond Department of Public Works</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designation of bicycle lanes and repair and maintenance of sidewalks</td>
<td>Richmond Department of Public Works</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic pattern change on grace from one-way to two-way</td>
<td>Richmond Department of Public Works</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation of cobblestone crosswalks and sidewalk bump-outs.</td>
<td>Richmond Department of Public Works</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation of bus bulb on Grace, Main, Cary and Franklin Street</td>
<td>Richmond Department of Public Works and GRTC</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designation of on-street parking</td>
<td>Richmond Department of Public Works</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of Parking Deck at Monroe and Grace, Foushee &amp; Adams, Main between Foushee &amp; 1st and Cary and 5th</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish Special Assessment District</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Streetscape</td>
<td>City of Richmond with Monroe Ward Business Association</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish Special Sustainability District</td>
<td>City of Richmond Department of Community Development</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish City-Wide LEED Standards</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create Monroe Ward Neighborhood Historic Overlay District Policy</td>
<td>Developers, Residents, Property Owners, and Business Owners in Shockoe Valley</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sources:

- Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines
- City of Champaign, Illinois, the Neighborhood Services Department
- Virginia Department of Historic Resources
- City of Richmond Market Study for the Master plan
- Institute of Traffic Engineers. Traffic Calming Measures http://www.ite.org/traffic/tcdevices.htm
### Table 1: CRIMES LISTED AS OTHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accident (property damage/injury)</td>
<td>Death by fire</td>
<td>Fam off, non-vio, contribute to delinq of minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alarm</td>
<td>Death investigation</td>
<td>Family offenses, non-violent, child abuse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other offenses</td>
<td>Death investigation (matter pending)</td>
<td>Family offenses, non-violent, child endangerment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annoying phone calls</td>
<td>Destruction property/city property</td>
<td>Family offenses, non-violent, child neglect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>Destruction property/city/graffiti</td>
<td>Family offenses, nonviolent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assaults, all others</td>
<td>Destruction property/private property</td>
<td>Financial crimes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt suicide</td>
<td>Destruction property/private/graffiti</td>
<td>Forcible fondling (child)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted suicide</td>
<td>Disorderly conduct</td>
<td>Forgery by check</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad checks</td>
<td>Disturb the peace</td>
<td>Forgery by credit card</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribery</td>
<td>Drunkenness</td>
<td>Forgery by money order</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City code violations</td>
<td>Dui</td>
<td>Forgery by prescription</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City vehicle accident</td>
<td>Dui, alcohol</td>
<td>Forgery/counterfeiting/all other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conspiracy to commit group a offenses</td>
<td>Dui, drugs</td>
<td>Found property</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to the delinquency of a minor</td>
<td>Embezzlement</td>
<td>Fraud all others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counterfeiting/forgery</td>
<td>Escape from custody</td>
<td>Fraud, atm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court documents</td>
<td>Extortion</td>
<td>Fraud, credit card</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit card/atm fraud</td>
<td>Extortion/blackmail</td>
<td>Fraud, innkeeper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruelty to animals</td>
<td>False alarm</td>
<td>Fraud, use false name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curfew/loitering/vagrancy</td>
<td>False information to police</td>
<td>Fraud/forgery incident</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cursing/obscene language</td>
<td>False pretenses/swindle/confidence game</td>
<td>Fugitive (out of state)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas drive off</td>
<td>Promiscuous shooting</td>
<td>Unintentional death</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit and run</td>
<td>Recovered vehicle-stolen other juris.</td>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonation</td>
<td>Rioting</td>
<td>Vandalism/destruction/damage of property</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecure building</td>
<td>Runaway</td>
<td>Warrant served from other jurisdiction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interfering with duties of pol ofcr</td>
<td>Sex offenses</td>
<td>Weapon law violation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>Shooting at occupied vehicle</td>
<td>Weapon law violations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnapping/abduction</td>
<td>Shooting at/within occupied dwelling</td>
<td>Weapon law violations, bombing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larceny</td>
<td>Shooting at/within/upon school grounds</td>
<td>Weapon law violations, concealed weapon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Littering</td>
<td>Stolen property offenses</td>
<td>Weapon law violations, explosives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost / suspicious property</td>
<td>Sudden death</td>
<td>Weapon law violations, fire bomb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost property</td>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>Welfare fraud</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental subject</td>
<td>Suspicious package</td>
<td>Wire fraud</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural death</td>
<td>Suspicious situation/person</td>
<td>Zoning violation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negligent manslaughter</td>
<td>Tampering with auto</td>
<td>Zoning violation - non permitted use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No business license</td>
<td>Throw missile at occupied dwelling</td>
<td>Lost / missing / suspicious property</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-reportable offenses</td>
<td>Throw missile at occupied vehicle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstructing justice</td>
<td>Traffic stop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overdose, non-lethal</td>
<td>Traffic-related death</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perjury</td>
<td>Trespass of real property</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of burglary tools</td>
<td>Truancy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
HOUSING PROFILE 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total households</td>
<td>8989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average household size</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Housing Units</td>
<td>1090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occupied housing units</td>
<td>989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner occupied housing units</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter Occupied Housing Units</td>
<td>978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population in Owner Occupied Units</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population in Renter Occupied Units</td>
<td>1313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Units</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income inflates to 2007 dollar value (Census Tract 305)</td>
<td>$24,929.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Housing Profile 2000, source: Census 2000

Mean of Transportation to Work (Census Tract 305)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car, Truck, Van</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>61.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transportation</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>18.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walked</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>31.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Mean of Transportation to Work, source: Census

CRIME RATE (2001-2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1256</td>
<td>61.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>18.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>6.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>4.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Theft</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>3.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>2.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Offence</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Crime Rate (2001-2007)

Age of The Structure (Census Tract 305)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Structure</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Units built 1939 or earlier</td>
<td>412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Units built 19490 to 1970</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Units built 1970 to 1989</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Units built after 1990</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Age of Structures, source: Census 2000

Figure 1: Surface Parking managed by the city, source: City of Richmond Website
Chart 1: Population by age group (Source: US Decennial Census 2000)