Thompson St. Corridor: Conceptual Design Recommendations

URSP 761-902 Studio 1 Class
Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

Graduate students from the Virginia Commonwealth University Masters in Urban and Regional Planning program were asked to develop a comprehensive redesign plan for the Thompson Street Corridor. The proposed plan outlines recommendations for the corridor that align with the City of Richmond’s effort to build stronger and more dynamic neighborhoods for its residents. A vibrant, thriving and livable corridor requires various characteristics, including safety and walkability, a unique architectural identity, robust recreational spaces and cohesive commercial and residential developments.

Although the Thompson Street corridor is located between two robust destinations on the southern and northern ends, Carytown and Scott’s Addition, respectively, the corridor lacks adequate safety, connectivity, destinations and residential and commercial development.

To address these issues, we worked with the City of Richmond and the Museum District Association to gain more insight into the corridor and to assess its current strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for development. This process also included performing a traffic analysis to assess the design speed and traffic geometry along the corridor. Lastly, an existing conditions model was developed to determine how features along the corridor are organized spatially and to gain a better understanding of the infrastructural space.

Our research led to the proposal of four key goals for the corridor: 1) Increase walkability, 2) Enhance the corridor’s identity, 3) Increase transportation safety and 4) Develop key destinations and gateways.

The implementation of this design proposal will require collaboration with various stakeholders within the city of Richmond beyond the department of planning and development, including the Department of Economic and Community Development, Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, Commission of Architecture Review, the Virginia Department of Transportation and continued work with the Museum District Association. These parties can work together to ensure a successful implementation of the proposed plan in order to make the Thompson Street corridor a thriving location within the city of Richmond.
Clients and Stakeholders

The client for this plan is the City of Richmond Department of Planning and Development Review with the primary stakeholders being the Museum District Association. Throughout the planning process the Studio I group has met with these two parties to discuss the research findings, initial design concepts, final design ideas and the recommendations discussed in detail in this plan. The primary clients and stakeholders have played a large part in directing the design ideas as well as being a voice of the community.

Study Area

Thompson St. is nestled between two commercial hubs in Richmond, Virginia. To the south is Carytown, a district of retail and restaurants that has attracted massive amounts of foot traffic for years, and to the north is Scott’s Addition, a neighborhood formerly known for the manufacturing industry that, in the past decade, has begun to transform into a mixed-use community known for its housing, restaurants, and breweries. Throughout the Thompson St. corridor there are multiple entrances and exits to Interstate-195, which runs parallel to Thompson St. on the west side, as well as a direct connection to Floyd Avenue, with its newly implemented Bike/Walk street. All of these factors make Thompson St. an important throughway for the area that has the capacity to become a multi-modal boulevard that not only connects two established commercial areas, but has the space necessary to become one itself.

In order to develop the commercial infrastructure and become a multi-modal connected street changes must be made. This plan addresses the ways in which Thompson St. is already successful and identifies how it can be improved from what is largely an “edge” street to a destination.

By looking at the demographics of the surrounding area, the zoning of the corridor, conducting a strengths, weaknesses and opportunities analysis, a traffic analysis and building an existing conditions model, goals, objectives and actions that point towards a more connected Thompson St. are identified.
Background Research

Demographics

A demographics analysis was conducted of the Thompson Street corridor to examine the changes that occurred in the area between 1990-2010 relative to changes seen in the city of Richmond and the larger Richmond Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Using Census data, this analysis explores social demographics, including, race, age and gender. It also examines educational attainment, household income and housing tenure. The purpose of this study was to understand design implications of the social and economic changes that have occurred along the corridor. For the purposes of this proposal, block groups along the corridor are used for analysis. Below are key findings from the demographic analysis.

Population

Between 1990-2010, the population of census tracts 407 and 408 in Block Group 1 along the corridor experienced a decrease in total population, dropping about 2% (US Census). In comparison to the population changes experienced within the City of Richmond and Richmond MSA, population changes along the corridor parallel those seen within the City.

Race

From 1990-2010, the corridor remained predominately White, with Whites comprising 80% of the population. In comparison to the city of Richmond, which remained predominately Black and African-American from 1990-2010, the racial composition along the corridor reflects the racial segregation of neighborhoods typically seen within the city of Richmond.

Educational Attainment

Education attainment along the corridor remained relatively consistent from 1990-2010, with most occupants having at least some college and a Bachelor’s degree. Educational attainment on Thompson Street corridor remained higher than that seen in the city of Richmond and the MSA.

Household Income

Household income along the corridor has increased over the past 20 years. According to the US Census, in 2015, the highest household incomes were $100,000-$124,999 and $70,000-$99,999, census tracts 407 and 408, respectively.

Age

Analysis of age along the corridor between 1990-2010 revealed that the 25-34 year cohort consistently comprised a significant portion of the population, followed by the age cohort 35-44 years. This could be attributed to the corridor’s close proximity to Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), which makes the location attractive to college students. From 1990-2010, the corridor experienced slight increases in its middle age and older populations, including 35-44 years and 45-54 years, which can be attributed to the proximity of the Museum District.

Household Tenure

Renting has remained popular along the corridor. Between 1990-2010, renters have occupied a larger proportion of housing than home owners, comprising at least 50% within Block Group 1 (Census Tract 407 and 408).
**Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities (SWO) Analysis**

A SWO analysis was used to assess the current state of Thompson street and to understand the opportunities to be pursued through the corridor’s design process. Strengths were defined as characteristics of the corridor that prove to be positive to the corridor’s functionality and current state. Weaknesses were attributes that remained underdeveloped and significantly affected safety and accessibility of residents. Lastly, opportunities were components of the corridor that could increase the corridor’s functionality, make it more attractive to residents and enhance its safety and use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Variety of building types and mix of uses – commercial, residential and office space</td>
<td>- Poor walkability</td>
<td>- Potential for infill</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Mix of housing types (multi-family and single-family homes)</td>
<td>- Confusing traffic flow</td>
<td>- Open space renovation</td>
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<td>- Humphrey Calder Community Center</td>
<td>- Confusing traffic geometry</td>
<td>- Spaces for youth recreation</td>
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<td>- Connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and highways</td>
<td>- Inappropriate design speed</td>
<td>- Develop on-street parking</td>
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<td>- Presence of recreational spaces</td>
<td>- Underutilized parking spaces</td>
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<td>- Mature trees along streetscape</td>
<td>- Expressway as barrier</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Established and successful businesses, including Burger Bach and Elwood Thompson</td>
<td>- Inconsistent architectural style</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Background Research**

Background Research: East/West connectivity along the Thompson St. Corridor is supplemented by the Bike/Walk Boulevard on Floyd St.

A sign designating use of greenspace operated by Albert Hill MS

*Photo: East/West connectivity along the Thompson St. Corridor is supplemented by the Bike/Walk Boulevard on Floyd St.*

*Photo: An obstructed sidewalk at the intersection of Kensington and Thompson*

*Photo: A sign designating use of greenspace operated by Albert Hill MS*
Background Research

Jeff Speck’s, a city planner and architectural designer, general theory of walkability states that four things need to happen simultaneously in order to have a walkable city; (1) there has to be a proper reason to walk, (2) the walk has to be safe and feel safe, (3) The walk has to be comfortable, and (4) the walk has to be interesting (TEDxMidAtlantic 2013). In this section, analysis will be done to see in what ways improvements can be made on the Thompson St. corridor to improve safety and comfort.

One of the primary issues identified in the original Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities section of the research was an inconsistent design speed and the confusing traffic geometry throughout the Thompson St. corridor. In order to analyze this in more depth, a traffic analysis that looks into lane width, traffic direction and other variables that could play roles in making this a weakness for the street must be analyzed. In this analysis, Thompson St. is broken into four distinct sections with different traffic flows. The sections are as follows:

1. Cary St. to Floyd Avenue
2. Floyd Avenue to Hanover Avenue
3. Hanover Avenue to Monument Avenue
4. Monument Avenue to Broad St.

From Cary St. to Floyd Avenue the road width is 45 feet with four lanes of traffic, two lanes going in each direction, with no on street parking. This sections of Thompson St. is the widest on the corridor. Due to this sections proximity to Carytown as well as several grocery stores including Martins, Elwood Thompson and Kroger large shipping trucks need to drive through this section, warranting the wide lanes. At the intersection of Floyd Avenue and Thompson St. there is an on/off ramp for the I-195 which means that drivers are still in the process of slowing down from interstate speeds when they make it to Thompson St., contributing to the poor design speed of the street. The intersection of Floyd and Thompson also has a diagonal crosswalk which makes pedestrians who are not familiar with the intersection confused, detracting from the pedestrian experience.

The second section of the traffic analysis is from Floyd Avenue to Hanover Avenue. In this section the road narrows from 45 feet to 30 feet and the amount of lanes drops from four to three, meaning each lane is 10 feet wide and traffic flows both north and south. This section gets away from the commercial-centric Carytown and the width of the streets mirrors this. While the narrow lanes assist with the design speed of this part of Thompson St., the intersection of Hanover and Thompson creates a precarious situation. An off-ramp for I-195 lets off onto Thompson St. and cars are still in the process of decreasing from interstate speeds. Compounding this issue, the western right of way does not have a sidewalk or crosswalk so pedestrians are forced to cross the street between intersections or turn around and go back to a previous intersection, creating a confusing, unsafe environment for the pedestrian.

The next section of the Thompson St. Corridor extends from Hanover St. to Monument Avenue, and is the longest unique section of the street. In this section the street becomes one way, north bound, and the width of the street increases to 35 feet. While a parking lane does exist it is lightly used, creating long stretches with 17.5 foot wide lanes that cars, many of which are merging onto Thompson St. from the interstate (at Thompson and Hanover) or merging onto the interstate (at Park and Thompson), drive at unsafe speeds.

While the traffic geometry between Hanover and Monument is not particularly confusing there are large sections of the through-way that do not have sidewalks. On the western side there are stretches from Hanover to Stuart and Patterson to Park without sidewalks and on the eastern side between Park Avenue and Wythe Avenue there are no sidewalks. When you combine the lack of sidewalks with large trees that protrude in the middle of the walking path, it forces the pedestrian to cross Thompson St. multiple times in order to safely use the space and can be a frustrating experience.

The last section of the Thompson St. corridor is between Monument Avenue and Broad St. In this section the street is still 35 feet wide but instead of only having two lanes for cars to drive there are four lanes, two for driving and two for parking, and at the intersections the parking lanes turn into turning lanes. Due to the narrower lanes this section of Thompson St. has the most logical design speed, cars are more likely to drive the speed limit, and there is no confusing traffic geometry.

By addressing the issues of poor design speed and confusing traffic geometry Thompson St. can become a safer and more comfortable place to walk, two of the four things that Jeff Speck believes makes a city more walkable.
Background Research

Existing Conditions Model

Existing conditions models serve many purposes. The Computer Integrated Construction department at Penn State University state that existing conditions models can increase the potential value of a project by enhancing the efficiency and accuracy of existing conditions documentation, providing documentation of environment for future uses, aiding in future modeling, etc. (Penn State 2011)

The primary thing that the existing conditions model addresses on the Thompson St. corridor is that it gives a sense of space for the structures and infrastructure that are already in place. This allows the group to accurately measure the existing features and determine what is necessary, and what can be addressed in a different way, in the area. It also gives a sense of how features in the corridor are organized spatially. This allows for a more in depth look at how the group can address various problems that are seen throughout Thompson St.

One problem that is addressed in the existing conditions model of the Thompson St. corridor is identifying where the sidewalks are missing and where trees block the paths of pedestrians. By knowing this information strategies, such as extending sidewalks and removing trees, can be developed to improve walkability along Thompson St.

Another problem that the existing conditions model helps address is locating infill sites such as vacant lots and large, mostly unused, parking lots. Throughout Thompson St. there are multiple locations where there is an underutilization of space. The existing conditions model gives an accurate layout of those areas allowing for proposed development to utilize the space in a more efficient manner.

While the existing conditions model allows for analysis of the space, the most important thing it does is give a base for adding proposed development and infrastructure changes along the corridor, allowing the group to take the next stage in the design process.
Vision Statement

The Thompson St. Corridor has the capacity to become a unique destination within the city of Richmond. Changes to improve safety, connectivity, vitality, and walkability are proposed throughout this plan. By making these improvements, the Thompson St. corridor will adopt a unique identity while also building a cohesive network of neighborhoods.
Goals, Objectives and Actions
Walkability

**Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor**

**Objective 1.1: Create a reason for people to walk to destinations along the corridor**

- Action 1.1.1: Enhance the commercial activity along Thompson St. near the intersections of Thompson and Cary and Thompson and W. Broad
- Action 1.1.2: Create a cohesive network of greenspace for leisure and exercise along the corridor

**Objective 1.2: Create an interesting walk along the corridor**

- Action 1.2.1: Add trees along the corridor where feasible
- Action 1.2.2: Add pedestrian oriented facades
- Action 1.2.3: Add recreation destinations
- Action 1.2.4: Enhance commercial uses and public plazas along corridor that provide places and spaces for people to interact

**Objective 1.3: Create a safe walking path along the corridor**

- Action 1.3.1: Build crosswalks at key intersections along corridor
- Action 1.3.2: Add appropriate crosswalk markings

**Objective 1.4: Create a comfortable walk along the corridor**

- Action 1.4.1: Widen sidewalks along North Thompson
- Action 1.4.2: Remove ivy from sidewalk to create unobstructed walkway for pedestrians
- Action 1.4.3: Construct sidewalks where none currently exist
- Action 1.4.4: Create a sense of enclosure with an optimum height to width ratio with new buildings along corridor

Identity

**Goal 2: Enhance the identity of the Thompson Street corridor by developing an appropriate design character**

**Objective 2.1: Create infill development that aligns with the architecture of adjacent neighborhoods**

- Action 2.1.1: Develop Cary Street gateway that compliments the style of Carytown
- Action 2.1.2: Develop and renovate residential uses from Monument to W. Broad that is compatible with the existing architectural styles of residential buildings in the Museum District

**Transportation Safety**

**Goal 3: Improve pedestrian, automobile and cyclist safety**

**Objective 3.1: Redesign traffic speed, geometry and intersections**

- Action 3.1.1: Improve traffic flow by redesigning geometry at key intersections including Floyd, Hanover, and Patterson/Kensington
- Action 3.1.2: Narrow traffic lanes to increase driver awareness and slow traffic to posted design speed

**Objective 3.2: Develop appropriate cycling infrastructure**

- Action 3.2.1: Create visible cycle track from Floyd Avenue to Broad Street
- Action 3.2.2: Create physical barrier between cyclists and automobiles
- Action 3.2.3: Create separation between pedestrians and cyclists using street trees

Destinations and Gateways

**Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor**

**Objective 4.1: Develop and enhance landmarks along the corridor**

- Action 4.1.1: Create versatile, multi-use anchor development at the intersection of Cary Street and Thompson Street
- Action 4.1.2: Create a series of plazas and seating areas between Cary Street and Floyd Avenue, to include a seated mosaic wall

**Objective 4.2: Enhance public space by developing and renovating recreational areas**

- Action 4.2.1: Create passive recreational activities, including walking and jogging trails between Floyd Avenue and Monument Avenue
- Action 4.2.2: Create active recreational spaces (including renovating sports facilities for tennis, volleyball, basketball, soccer and baseball)
- Action 4.2.3: Rebuild the Humphrey Calder Community Center
- Action 4.2.4: Create a partnership with Richmond Public Schools in order to open school recreation area to the public

**Objective 4.3: Create a pedestrian oriented commercial presence along corridor**

- Action 4.3.1: Develop infill sites
- Action 4.3.2: Move parking structures behind buildings
- Action 4.3.3: Develop café zones on sidewalks near Cary and Thompson and near W. Broad and Thompson

**Goal 5: Create gateways that welcome people to Thompson Street**

**Objective 5.1: Use design elements to draw people onto the Thompson Street corridor**

- Action 5.1.1: Build a large apartment building at the intersection of Cutshaw St. and Thompson St. to create a terminating vista
- Action 5.1.2: Build iconic architecture at Cary and Broad Street along corridor
- Action 5.1.3: Enhance existing bridges with landscaping elements
Conceptual Design Recommendations
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.1: Create a reason for people to walk to destinations along the corridor
Action 1.1.1: Enhance the commercial activity along Thompson St. near the intersections of Thompson and Cary and Thompson and Broad
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor

Objective 1.1: Create a reason for people to walk to destinations along the corridor

Action 1.1.1: Enhance the commercial activity along Thompson St. near the intersections of Thompson and Cary and Thompson and Broad

A - Continue store frontage of Carytown to Thompson St.
B - Develop mixed-use structures at the intersection of Thompson Street and Cary Street
C - Construct Arcade
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.1: Create a reason for people to walk to destinations along the corridor
Action 1.1.1: Enhance the commercial activity along Thompson St. near the intersections of Thompson and Cary and Thompson and Broad
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor

Objective 1.1: Create a reason for people to walk to destinations along the corridor

Action 1.1.1: Enhance the commercial activity along Thompson St. near the intersections of Thompson and Cary and Thompson and Broad

A - Create store frontages along Broad St.
B - Develop mixed-use structures at the intersection of Thompson and Broad
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.1: Create a reason for people to walk to destinations along the corridor
Action 1.1.2.: Create a cohesive network of greenspace for leisure and exercise along the corridor
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.1: Create a reason for people to walk to destinations along the corridor
Action 1.1.2.: Create a cohesive network of greenspace for leisure and exercise along the corridor

A - Little league baseball diamond
B - Regulation soccer pitch
C - Basketball Courts
D - Tennis Courts
E - Playgrounds
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.2: Create an interesting walk along the corridor
Action 1.2.1: Add street trees along the corridor where feasible
After

Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.2: Create an interesting walk along the corridor
Action 1.2.1: Add street trees along the corridor where feasible

Add street trees towards Cary St. intersection
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.2: Create an interesting walk along the corridor
Action 1.2.2: Add pedestrian-oriented facades

Before
Goal 1: Create a vibrant Walkable Corridor  
Objective 1.2: Create an interesting walk along the corridor  
Action 1.2.2: Add pedestrian oriented facades

After

Infill development along N. Thompson St. towards W. Broad will face out towards N. Thompson St.
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.2: Create an interesting walk along the corridor
Action 1.2.3: Add recreation destinations

Before
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.2: Create an interesting walk along the corridor
Action 1.2.3: Add recreation destinations

A - Tennis Courts
B - Playgrounds
C - Basketball Courts
D - Volleyball Courts
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.2: Create an interesting walk along the corridor
Action 1.2.4: Enhance commercial uses and public plazas along corridor that provide places and spaces for people to interact
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.2: Create an interesting walk along the corridor
Action 1.2.4: Enhance commercial uses and public plazas along corridor that provide places and spaces for people to interact

A - Space for dining
B - Space for leisure and events
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.3: Create a safe walking path along the corridor
Action 1.3.1: Build crosswalks at key intersections along corridor
Action 1.3.2: Add appropriate crosswalk markings

Before
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.3: Create a safe walking path along the corridor
Action 1.3.1: Build crosswalks at key intersections along corridor
Action 1.3.2: Add appropriate crosswalk markings

A - Better define existing crosswalks
B - Extend sidewalk in order to make west side of Floyd Avenue safer
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor

Objective 1.4: Create a comfortable walk along the corridor

Action 1.4.1: Widen sidewalks along North Thompson St.

Before

Sidewalk is 6 feet along North Thompson Street from Monument Avenue to Broad Street
After

Increase sidewalk width from 6 feet to 10 feet

Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.4: Create a comfortable walk along the corridor
Action 1.4.1: Widen sidewalks along North Thompson Street
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.4: Create a comfortable walk along the corridor
Action 1.4.2: Remove ivy from sidewalk to create unobstructed walkway for pedestrians
Action 1.4.3: Construct sidewalks where none currently exist
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.4: Create a comfortable walk along the corridor
Action 1.4.2: Remove ivy from sidewalk to create unobstructed walkway for pedestrians
Action 1.4.3: Construct sidewalks where none currently exist

Create sidewalks where none exist and remove ivy
Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.4: Create a comfortable walk along the corridor
Action 1.4.4: Create a sense of enclosure with an optimum height to width ratio with new buildings along corridor

Before
After

Goal 1: Create a vibrant walkable corridor
Objective 1.4: Create a comfortable walk along the corridor
Action 1.4.4: Create a sense of enclosure with an optimum height to width ratio with new buildings along corridor

Bring structures closer to property line and increase height to better match street width to create a sense of enclosure
Goal 2: Enhance the identity of the Thompson Street corridor by developing an appropriate design character

Objective 2.1: Create infill development that aligns with the architecture of adjacent neighborhoods

Action 2.1.1: Develop Cary Street gateway that compliments the style of Carytown

Before
Goal 2: Enhance the identity of the Thompson Street corridor by developing and appropriate design character

Objective 2.1: Create infill development that aligns with the architecture of adjacent neighborhoods

Action 2.1.1: Develop Cary Street gateway that compliments the style of Carytown

Transitioning from two story structures to five story structures
Goal 2: Enhance the identity of the Thompson Street corridor by developing and appropriate design character

Objective 2.1: Create infill development that aligns with the architecture of adjacent neighborhoods

Action 2.1.2: Develop and renovate residential uses from Monument to W. Broad that is compatible with the existing architectural styles of residential buildings in the Museum District

Before
Mirroring the architectural styles of the Museum District, new residential structures face Thompson Street, providing a strong orientation towards the street between Monument Avenue and West Broad Street.
Goal 3: Improve pedestrian, automobile and cyclist safety along the corridor

Objective 3.1: Redesign traffic speed, geometry and intersections

Action 3.1.1: Improve traffic flow by redesigning geometry at key intersections including Floyd, Hanover, and Patterson/Kensington.
After

Add wide, brick paved crosswalks where none currently exist as well as adding sidewalks where none currently exist.

Goal 3: Improve pedestrian, automobile and cyclist safety along the corridor
Objective 3.1: Redesign traffic speed, geometry and intersections
Action 3.1.1: Improve traffic flow by redesigning geometry at key intersections including Floyd, Hanover, and Patterson/Kensington.
Goal 3: Improve pedestrian, automobile and cyclist safety along the corridor

Objective 3.1: Redesign traffic speed, geometry and intersections

Action 3.1.2: Narrow traffic lanes to increase driver awareness and slow traffic to posted design speed
Add a cycle track to create alternative transportation options, and narrow travel lanes creating a safer design speed.
Goal 3: Improve pedestrian, automobile and cyclist safety along the corridor
Objective 3.2: Develop appropriate cycling infrastructure
Action 3.2.1: Create visible cycle track from Floyd Avenue to W. Broad Street
Action 3.2.2: Create physical barrier between cyclists and vehicles
Action 3.2.3: Create separation between pedestrians and cyclists using street trees

Before
Goal 3: Improve pedestrian, automobile and cyclist safety along the corridor

Objective 3.2: Develop appropriate cycling infrastructure
Action 3.2.1: Create visible cycle track from Floyd Avenue to Broad Street
Action 3.2.2: Create physical barrier between cyclists and automobiles
Action 3.2.3: Create separation between pedestrians and cyclists using trees

A - Create a visible cycle track that connects Thompson St. to the Floyd Bike/Walk Street
B - Add removable bollards to separate automobiles from cyclists
C - Add street trees to separate pedestrians from cyclists
Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor

Objective 4.1: Develop and enhance landmarks along the corridor

Action 4.1.1: Create versatile, multi-use anchor development at the intersection of Cary Street and Thompson Street

Action 4.1.2: Create a series of plazas and seating areas between Cary Street and Floyd Avenue, to include a mosaic seating wall

Before
Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor

Objective 4.1: Develop and enhance landmarks along the corridor

Action 4.1.1: Create versatile, multi-use anchor development at the intersection of Cary Street and Thompson Street

Action 4.1.2: Create a series of plazas and seating areas between Cary Street and Floyd Avenue, to include a mosaic seating wall
Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 4.2: Develop and renovate parks and recreational areas along the corridor to enhance experiences in public space

Action 4.2.1: Create passive recreational activities, including walking and jogging trails between Floyd Avenue and Monument Avenue
Action 4.2.2: Create active recreational spaces
Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 4.2: Develop and renovate parks and recreational areas along the corridor to enhance experiences in public space
Action 4.2.1: Create passive recreational activities, including walking and jogging trails between Floyd Avenue and Monument Avenue
Action 4.2.2: Create active recreational spaces

A - Create a 1-mile walking path
B - Add active recreation facilities such as basketball courts and playgrounds
Before

Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 4.2: Develop and renovate parks and recreational areas along the corridor to enhance experiences in public space
Action 4.2.3: Rebuild the Humphrey Calder Community Center
Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 4.2: Develop and renovate parks and recreational areas along the corridor to enhance experiences in public space
Action 4.2.3: Rebuild the Humphrey Calder Community Center

Reconstruct the Humphrey Calder Community Center to reflect the character and design intent of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor

Objective 4.2: Develop and renovate parks and recreational areas along the corridor to enhance experiences in public space

Action 4.2.4: Create a partnership with Richmond Public Schools in order to open school recreation area to the public
Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 4.2: Develop and renovate parks and recreational areas along the corridor to enhance experiences in public space
Action 4.2.4: Create a partnership with Richmond Public Schools in order to open school recreational areas to the public

After

Add a regulation soccer and little league baseball field that is open to the public in greenspace north of Patterson
Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 4.3: Create a pedestrian-oriented commercial presence along corridor
Action 4.3.1: Develop infill sites

Before

Surface parking lots can be better utilized with more efficient parking and dense development
Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 4.3: Create a pedestrian-oriented commercial presence along corridor
Action 4.3.1: Develop infill sites

A - At Berrington Ct., relocate the firehouse and create multi-use buildings accompanied by sustainable parking structures with green roofs and a trail along the western edge
B - At the Emmanuel Baptist Church parking lot develop single-family housing and a sustainable parking structure
Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 4.3: Create a pedestrian-oriented commercial presence along corridor
Action 4.3.2: Move parking structures behind buildings
Create an innovative, sustainable parking structure with green space on top behind residential development on Thompson St. towards W. Broad St.
Before

Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 4.3: Create a pedestrian-oriented commercial presence along corridor
Action 4.3.3: Develop café zones on sidewalks near Cary St. and Thompson St. and near W. Broad St. and Thompson St.
After

Adding café zones to the sidewalk creates an interesting, usable element of Thompson St.

Goal 4: Create meaningful places along the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 4.3: Create a pedestrian-oriented commercial presence along corridor
Action 4.3.3: Develop café zones on sidewalks near Cary St. and Thompson St. and near W. Broad St. and Thompson St.
Goal 5: Create gateways that welcome people to the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 5.1: Use design elements to draw people onto the Thompson Street corridor
Action 5.1.1: Build a large Residential building at the intersection of Cutshaw St. and Thompson St. to create a terminating vista

Before
After

Replacing a parking lot entrance with a larger terminating vista will draw the eye of the pedestrian west towards Thompson St. while also creating a place and negating the “edge” element of Thompson St.

Goal 5: Create gateways that welcome people to the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 5.1: Use design elements to draw people onto the Thompson Street corridor
Action 5.1.1: Build a large Residential building at the intersection of Cutshaw St. and Thompson St. to create a terminating vista
Goal 5: Create gateways that welcome people to the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 5.1: Use design elements to draw people onto the Thompson Street corridor
Action 5.1.2: Build iconic architecture at Cary St. and Thompson St. and W. Broad Street and Thompson St. along corridor

Before
Goal 5: Create gateways that welcome people to the Thompson Street corridor

Objective 5.1: Use design elements to draw people onto the Thompson Street corridor

Action 5.1.2: Build iconic architecture at Cary and Broad Street along corridor

After

Iconic architecture at the intersection of Cary and Broad St. will draw people to Thompson St.
Before

Goal 5: Create gateways that welcome people to the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 5.1: Use design elements to draw people onto the Thompson Street corridor
Action 5.1.3: Enhance existing bridges with landscaping elements
After

Goal 5: Create gateways that welcome people to the Thompson Street corridor
Objective 5.1: Use design elements to draw people onto the Thompson Street corridor
Action 5.1.3: Enhance existing bridges with landscaping elements

Beautification of bridges will draw pedestrians from the west towards Thompson St. along major east/west corridors.
Conclusion

For many years the Thompson St. Corridor has been an afterthought in terms of development in the city of Richmond. What should be considered a part of the surrounding neighborhoods is treated as an edge, somewhere to get from A to B as opposed to being an active destination with many uses.

Through research analysis of the Thompson St. Corridor and conceptual design recommendations this plan looks into ways in which Thompson St. can have an identity of its own. The goals, objectives and actions outlined in this plan show how the Thompson St. corridor can become a destination while also improving walkability and improving safety for all users.
Plan Implementation
## Renovated Thompson St. Corridor

### Action Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>RESPONSIBLE PARTY</th>
<th>ACTION IMPLEMENTATION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action 1.1.1. Enhance commercial activity along Thompson St</td>
<td>Private Developer</td>
<td>2028-2038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 1.1.2. Create a cohesive network of greenspace</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
<td>2021-2028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 1.2.1. Add trees along corridor</td>
<td>City of Richmond and Private Developer</td>
<td>2028-2038</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 1.2.2. Add pedestrian oriented facades</td>
<td>City of Richmond Regulations and Private Developer</td>
<td>2021-2028</td>
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<td>Action 1.2.3. Add recreation destinations</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 1.2.4. Enhance public plazas along Thompson St</td>
<td>City of Richmond and Private Developer</td>
<td>2021-2028</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 1.3.1. Build crosswalks</td>
<td>City of Richmond and VDOT</td>
<td>2018-2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 1.3.2. Add crosswalk marking</td>
<td>City of Richmond and VDOT</td>
<td>2018-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 1.4.1. Widen sidewalks</td>
<td>City of Richmond and Private Developer</td>
<td>2021-2028</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 1.4.2. Remove ivy from sidewalks</td>
<td>City of Richmond Code Enforcement</td>
<td>2021-2028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 1.4.3. Construct sidewalks</td>
<td>City of Richmond and Private Developer</td>
<td>2021-2028</td>
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<td>Action 1.4.4. Create optimum height to width ratio with new buildings</td>
<td>City of Richmond Regulations</td>
<td>2028-2038</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 2.1.1. Develop Cary Street gateway</td>
<td>Private Developer</td>
<td>2028-2038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 2.1.2. Develop and renovate residential buildings with existing architectural style</td>
<td>City of Richmond Regulations and Private Developer</td>
<td>2028-2038</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Renovated Thompson St. Corridor

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<tr>
<td>Action 3.1.1. Improve traffic flow</td>
<td>City of Richmond and VDOT</td>
<td>2021-2028</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 3.1.2. Narrow traffic lanes</td>
<td>City of Richmond and VDOT</td>
<td>2021-2028</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 3.2.1. Create visible cycle track</td>
<td>City of Richmond and VDOT</td>
<td>2018-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 3.2.2. Create physical barrier between cyclists and automobiles</td>
<td>City of Richmond and VDOT</td>
<td>2018-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 3.2.3. Create separation using street trees</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
<td>2018-2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 4.1.1. Create multi-use development</td>
<td>City of Richmond and Private Developer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 4.1.2. Create plazas and a mosaic wall</td>
<td>City of Richmond and Private Developer</td>
<td>2028-2038</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 4.2.1. Create walking and jogging trails</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
<td>2021-2028</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 4.2.2. Create active recreational spaces</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
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<td>Action 4.2.3. Rebuild Humphrey Calder Community Center</td>
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<td>2028-2038</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 4.2.4. Create partnership with Richmond Public Schools</td>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
<td>2018-2020</td>
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<td>Action 4.3.1. Develop infill sites</td>
<td>Private Developer</td>
<td>2028-2038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 4.3.2. Move parking structures behind buildings</td>
<td>City of Richmond Regulations</td>
<td>2028-2038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 4.3.3. Develop café zones</td>
<td>City of Richmond Regulations and Private Developer</td>
<td>2028-2038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 5.1.1. Develop large apartment building</td>
<td>Private Developer</td>
<td>2028-2038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action 5.1.2. Build iconic architecture</td>
<td>City of Richmond Regulations and Private Developer</td>
<td>2028-2038</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action 5.1.3. Enhance existing bridges</td>
<td>City of Richmond and VDOT</td>
<td>2021-2028</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix
Population

Thompson Street Total Population 1990-2010

Richmond City and Richmond MSA Total Population 1990-2010
Age
Race

Richmond MSA, Richmond City & Thompson Street, 1990-2010

- White alone
- Black or African American alone
- American Indian and Alaska Native alone
- Asian alone
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone
- Some Other Race alone
- Two or More Races
Education Attainment

Education Attainment for Population 25 Years and over
Thompson Street, Richmond City and Richmond, MSA
1990-2010

- Less than Highschool
- Some College
- Graduate or professional degree
- High school graduate (includes equivalent)
- Bachelors degree
Household Income

Median Household Income
Thomson Street Corridor

Median Household Income
Richmond City and Richmond MSA

L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs
Household Tenure
Traffic Analysis