1. NINTH STREET CORRIDOR

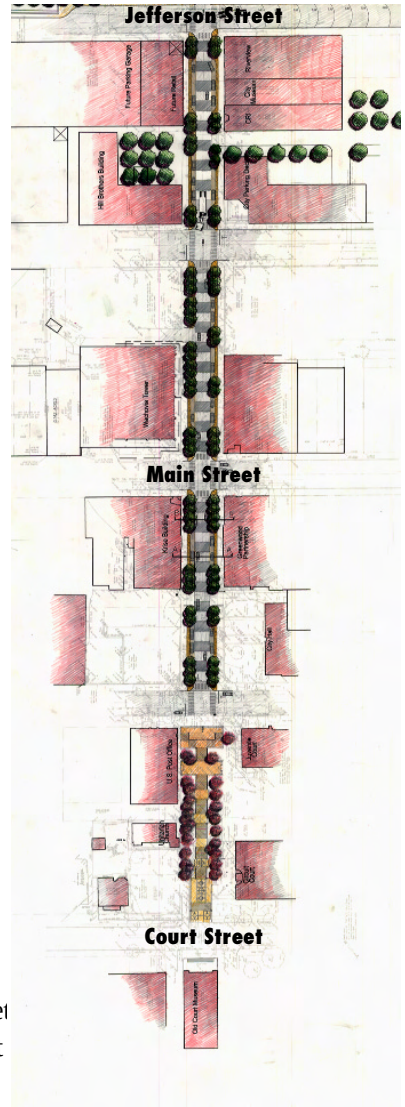
The Ninth Street Corridor is the historic spine of the downtown. From the original ferry landing on the James River, Ninth Street extends up the hill to Monument Terrace. These grand stairs lead up to the Old Court House Museum at the top of the hill. As a cross-section of downtown, the Ninth Street Corridor connects the activities on each of the main cross streets: riverfront activities and future residential uses along Jefferson Street; offices and parking along Commerce Street; retail and offices along Main Street; City and other offices on Church Street; and court and other administrative functions on Court Street.

Several private and public initiatives are underway on the Ninth Street Corridor today. The City of Lynchburg has committed to renovating the historic J. W. Ould Building on Ninth and Commerce Streets to accommodate the Human Service Department. Adjacent to this building, the City could build a parking garage with ground-floor retail. A new children's museum, Amazement Square, opens March 2001 in the J. W. Wood Building at the foot of Ninth Street at Jefferson Street. The former Craddock Terry warehouse on the opposite corner of this intersection is being considered for housing and artist space as the Riverviews Artists' Lofts. The City has committed funding to improve Monument Terrace and Ninth Street.

The width of the street corridor is typically 60 feet from building face to building face. Currently the street has narrow 8-foot sidewalks, which allow only a 5-foot clear zone after accounting for trees, poles, and signs. The existing street has continuous on-street parking on both sides and one travel lane in each direction on Ninth Street. At the Main Street intersection, a left-turn lane is provided for westbound traffic.

The grade along Ninth Street averages 12%, which is relatively steep but not prohibitive for vehicles and pedestrians. Few doorways actually open on to Ninth Street. While the existing holly trees along the length of the street are green year-round, they do not provide the large spreading canopy that would create shade or a sense of grandeur.

With the renovations to Monument Terrace and the implementation of a consistent streetscape between Church Street and the Kanawha Bridge, the Ninth Street corridor will become a walkable, attractive link between the top of the hill and the river. In the future, the street will have wide sidewalks on both sides with a minimum dimension of 11 feet. At the intersections and at intervals along the street, the sidewalks will "bump-out" to be a total of 18 feet wide, allowing street tree planting and shady rest areas with benches. Public art or historic signage could be incorporated within the zone of tree planting, continuing the theme established by the memorials on Monument Terrace. Some on-street parking will remain on either side, but these spaces will be contained in small

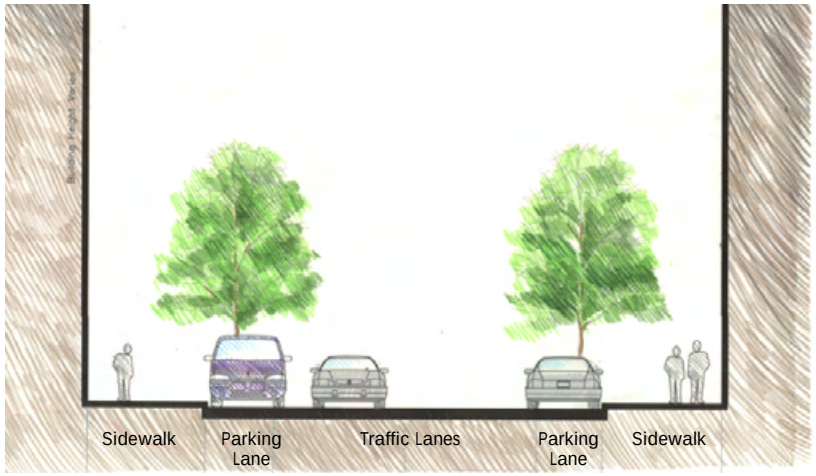


Ninth Street Rendered Plan

two- or three-car zones set between the street trees. One travel lane in each direction will be maintained.

Monument Terrace will be renovated to address structural and restoration issues and to increase the visibility of and the views from this key civic landmark. The lighting, planting, and furnishings along the Ninth Street Corridor will complement Monument Terrace and reflect the historic character of the downtown.

The public investment along the Ninth Street Corridor will positively affect all of downtown by strengthening the significance of Monument Terrace and by providing badly needed pedestrian connections down to the Human Services Building, Amazement Square, Riverviews, and the riverfront. Since this project will occur in phases, the following pages describe the implementation of each key segment of the corridor.



Ninth Street Typical Section

Ninth Street Corridor Existing Conditions

W.G. Hook

Rendering of Ninth Street Improvements Looking Toward Monument Terrace

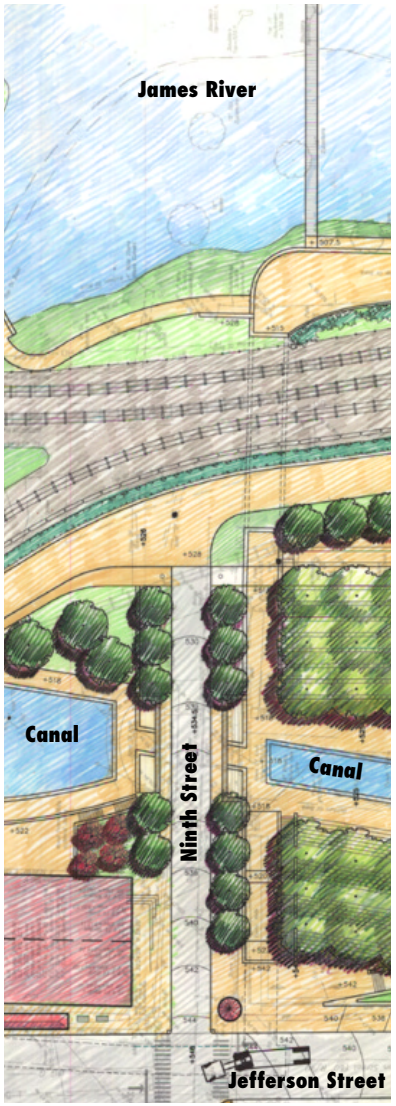
1.1 Lower Ninth Street: Kanawha Bridge to Commerce Street

The lower portion of Ninth Street is a high-priority project because of the imminent opening of Amazement Square, which is currently scheduled for early 2001. Before streetscape improvement can occur, the necessary separation of the sanitary sewer and storm drainage system will be completed as part of the larger sewer interceptor project. The schedule for streetscape improvements in this zone must also be closely coordinated with the programming, design and construction of the J. W. Ould Building renovation, courtyard and parking area. Construction on this project is scheduled to be complete in 2003.

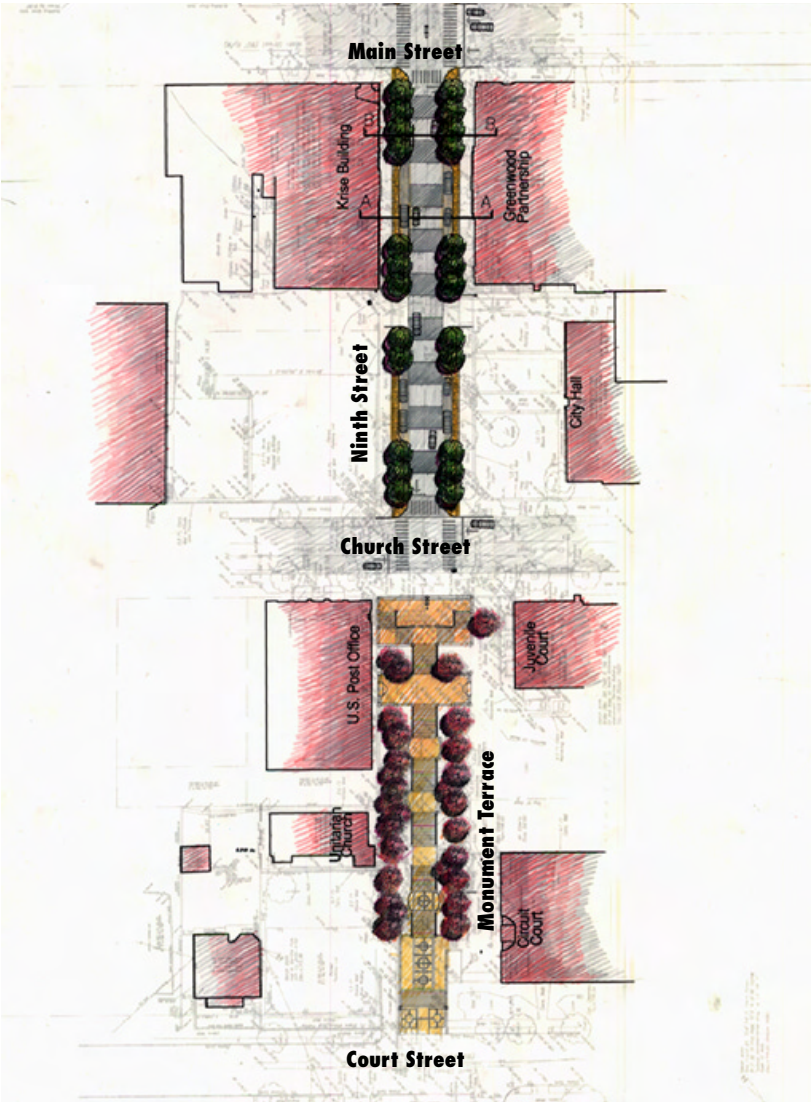
The segment of Ninth Street between Jefferson Street and Commerce Street will continue to function as a truck route providing a key connection between the Concord Turnpike and Commerce Street leading to Business Route 29 and Rivermont on the west. Although the goal will be to relocate this truck route in the long term, the design of this portion of Ninth Street must reflect adequate turning radii for this east-west movement in the foreseeable future. To support Amazement Square, buses will be arriving via Ninth Street and turning left onto Jefferson Street to drop off, before turning in the lower level of the future garage and exiting back onto Jefferson Street. Because of the steep grades and the projected truck and bus activity on this particular segment of Ninth Street, vehicular access to the J. W. Ould Building and possible future garage should be located on Commerce Street (upper levels of garage), Eighth Street, and/or Jefferson Street (lower levels of garage).

Summary of Implementation Steps

- Complete construction documents.
- Secure funding for construction.
- Separate sanitary and storm sewers.
- Coordinate with J. W. Ould Building and garage projects.



Detailed Plan of Ninth Street Connection to Waterfront



Ninth Street Detail: Main Street to Court Street

1.2 Upper Ninth Street: Commerce Street to Church Street

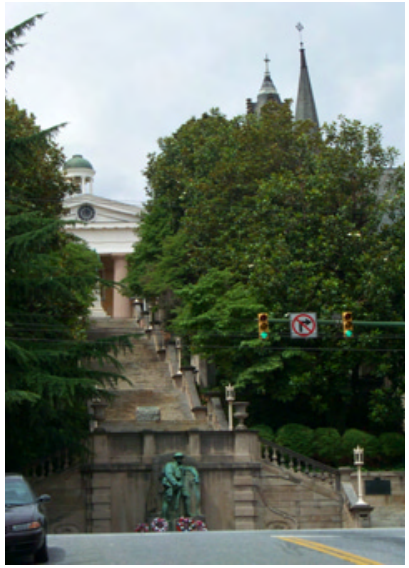
Given the importance of the overall corridor, streetscape improvements for Upper Ninth Street should be started as soon as the sewer separation project is complete.

Truck movement should be discouraged on Ninth Street between Commerce Street and Church Street through the use of signage, narrow turning radii, and a vigilant enforcement program. Local trucks serving businesses on Main Street are expected to arrive via Main Street from the east and west, suggesting little need for truck use on upper Ninth Street. This suggests that the curb radii at the Main Street and Church Street intersections can favor pedestrian crossings and allow more room for nearby street trees and street furnishings.

Based on a traffic study commissioned by the City, proper timing of the signals in the Ninth Street Corridor will mitigate the need for any left-turn lanes. This signal timing is critical in order to maintain adequate sidewalk widths where pedestrian use is highest while minimizing peak-hour congestion on the street.

Implementation Steps

- Separate sewers.
- Change signal timing.
- Complete construction documents.
- Secure funding for construction.



Monument Terrace

1.3 Monument Terrace

Monument Terrace is the preeminent civic landmark in downtown Lynchburg and has tremendous symbolic and historic significance. Today, however, it is underutilized as the civic park it was designed to be. The design and use of the structure, which includes stairs, landings, walls, memorial plaques, war monuments, and fountains, must be maximized. The current landscape plantings, which were installed in the 1950s to replace the original poplar trees, are now overgrown and may be causing structural damage to the walls. Their growth has taken over the architecture of the monument and is obscuring the view to the Old Court House Museum, which is the focal point of the Ninth Street Corridor.

The City is just beginning the design process for the restoration of this key feature; Versar Greenwood has been seleced as the architect. This process will involve community outreach to solicit concerns and ideas and to inform the programming and design of the space. The project also will address the structural repairs to the walls and stairs, as well as the replacement and/or restoration of and improvements to paving materials, lighting, furnishings, fountains, memorials, and landscape plantings.

Implementation

- Ensure community outreach during design process.
- Use City funding to leverage private contributions.