



TO: Mayor & Town Council

FROM: Matt Gladdek, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Study Town taking ownership of Franklin Street

DATE: October 22, 2021

On behalf of the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership Board, I present the following petition to the Town Council concerning Franklin Street.

The board unanimously voted this month to ask the town to explore taking over ownership of Franklin Street, from at least Henderson Pritchard or Henderson Street to Merritt Mill, from the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

The pandemic has been an extremely difficult time for all community members, including the businesses in downtown. A silver lining of the pandemic has been the prolonged pilot of expanded sidewalks and expanded outdoor dining. We've learned many lessons about the benefit of making it easier to cross lanes of traffic, the needs of loading zones on West Franklin St., and how crucial the public space is between our building fronts on Franklin Street.

Under the current NCDOT rules restaurants will lose these expanded sidewalks in May unless the town takes over this space.

The downtown businesses and the Partnership Board are incredibly grateful to the town for purchasing the barriers that have allowed these new loading zones, parking spots, and expanded sidewalks. We hope the town takes over Franklin Street so that businesses can keep these spaces and can bring private investment to improving these spaces and make the village main street the reality we all desire.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt T. Gladdek".

Matt Gladdek

Executive Director