



## Legislation Text

File #: [22-0083], Version: 1

### Provide Guidance on West Franklin Street Restriping.

**Staff:**

Colleen Willger, Director  
Bergen Watterson, Transportation Planning Manager  
Sarah Poulton, Downtown Special Projects Manager

**Department:**

Planning  
Planning  
Managers Office

**Overview:** Council is being asked to provide guidance on the design for West Franklin Street when the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) resurfaces the road in summer 2022. Staff shared options for West Franklin Street with Town Council on [January 5, 2022](#) <https://chapelhill.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=A&ID=907371&GUID=24035C3B-4060-4603-9391-FA82543B1F39> and is now seeking final input on restriping plans only. In order to adhere to NCDOT guidelines, there are two options for restriping the road after resurfacing: traffic-running bike lanes and curb-running bike lanes, both of which are described in more detail below.

Staff will return to Council in the spring to discuss next steps and timeline for transferring maintenance of Franklin Street and future design options, including a public input process on those designs. None of the options presented tonight for NCDOT's restriping would limit the options for future road configuration.

### ☆ **Recommendation(s):**

That the Council provide input on how NCDOT should restripe West Franklin Street after resurfacing in summer 2022.

**Decision Points:**

- How West Franklin Street is restriped after NCDOT resurfaces the road in summer 2022 (see decision matrix attached for more detail).

**Key Issues:**

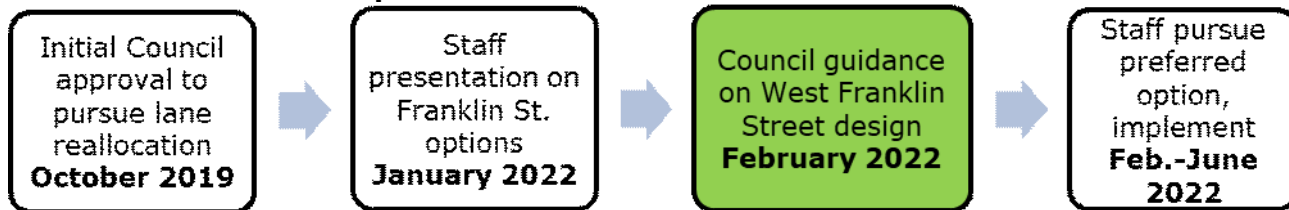
- NCDOT must have an approved pavement marking plan by March 2022 to restripe the road and that plan must meet current federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) requirements as long as the road is NCDOT-owned.
- If the Town does not provide NCDOT with an approved pavement marking plan West Franklin Street will revert to its pre-COVID five-lane design. Staff does not recommend returning to that configuration.
- The road resurfacing and restriping does not affect future design of Franklin Street but does allow the Town to take advantage of NCDOT resurfacing.
- The Town will have time for a public input process to determine a future vision.
- Resurfacing and restriping will not change the current sidewalk dining configurations. Businesses are required to leave a five-foot clear zone on the sidewalk to ensure ADA accessibility and all restaurants are currently in compliance.
- NCDOT regulations prohibit businesses from using the asphalt part of the street for commerce.
- Two bike lane options are being considered:
  - Curb-running bike lanes: this design has cyclists in a lane between the curb and parked

cars; it is a safer design for cyclists but will reduce the number of on-street parking spaces at driveways and intersections. The design is not complete and will require additional funds to complete (see below).

- Traffic-running bike lanes: this has cyclists in a lane between moving traffic and parked cars; it maintains the pre-COVID number of parking spaces; the design is almost complete, but will also require additional funds to complete (though less than curb-running).
- Bike lanes on West Franklin Street allow the Town to test and evaluate potential future designs.
- The temporary lane reduction on West Franklin Street has improved road safety. Vehicle crashes on West Franklin Street decreased by 48% in 2021 compared to 2019, and bicycle/pedestrian crashes decreased by 33%.
- Curb-running bike lanes will reduce on-street parking spaces which, according to a recent parking data report, are in high demand with Downtown visitors.

**Fiscal Impact/Resources:** Regardless of what bike lane design chosen, there are costs associated with signal plans and Merritt Mill median redesign, approximately \$32,000. Curb-running bike lanes would require an additional \$5,000 for design. The signal plan implementation and median construction will require additional funding, but that amount is unknown at this time.

**Where is this item in its process?**



**Attachments:**

- West Franklin Street decision matrix
- Draft Staff Presentation

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**The Agenda will reflect the text below and/or the motion text will be used during the meeting.**

PRESENTER: Bergen Watterson, Transportation Planning Manager  
Sarah Poulton, Downtown Special Projects Manager

The purpose of this item is for the Council to provide guidance on West Franklin Street restriping.