



Legislation Text

File #: [22-0752], Version: 1

Provide Guidance on Options for the Future of Franklin Street Downtown.

Staff:

Bergen Watterson, Transportation Planning Manager
Sarah Poulton, Senior Project Manager

Department:

Planning
Manager's Office

Overview: Franklin Street is Chapel Hill's "Main Street", serving as the primary commercial and social hub of the Town. The road is currently maintained by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and W. Franklin St. recently became a two-lane road with bike lanes and parallel parking on both sides along some of the corridor. Town Council has expressed interest in transferring maintenance of Franklin Street from NCDOT which would allow the Town to consider additional bike, pedestrian, and commercial enhancements that are not currently allowed by NCDOT.

Staff created an informational presentation and survey, and conducted a FlashVote, to gather feedback from the public. The survey was open for two weeks and received 348 responses; FlashVote was open for 48 hours and got 362 responses.

**Recommendation(s):**

That the Council provide guidance on the options for Franklin Street Downtown. The final recommendation is dependent on what enhancements we would like to see on Franklin Street Downtown.

Decision Points:

- What additional bike, pedestrian and commercial-support enhancements does Council want to see Downtown?
- Should the Town request a transfer of maintenance of Franklin St. between Raleigh St. and Merritt Mill Rd. from NCDOT?

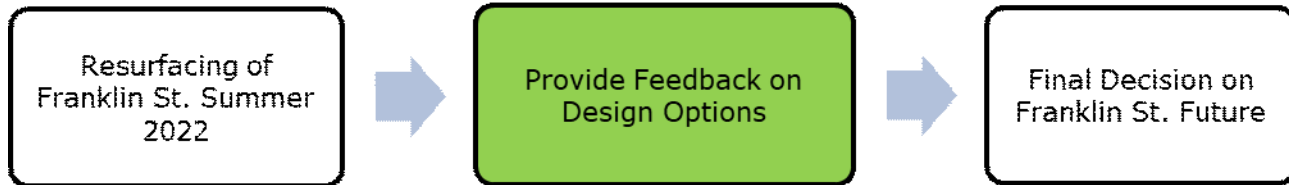
Key Issues:

- The cost to the Town for one-time upgrades needed at some point after taking over maintenance of approximately one mile of Franklin St. between Raleigh St. and Merritt Mill Rd. is estimated to be up to \$2.7million, including major stormwater system replacements (see attached presentation for details).
 - The annual cost of maintaining the road is estimated at approximately \$190,000, which includes a new Stormwater employee dedicated to Franklin St.
- Town control of Franklin St. would allow more autonomy and allow better alignment of street design and Town goals. Such goals include economic development and emphasizing the safety of vulnerable road users of the street.
- Some bike and pedestrian improvements are possible without transferring maintenance including, but not necessarily limited to, additional vertical bollards, additional bike lane paint, stamped crosswalks, and streetscape improvements.
- See Survey Results attachment for trends and takeaways from the public survey.

Fiscal Impact/Resources: The fiscal impact depends on the guidance provided. Transferring

maintenance of Franklin Street from NCDOT to the Town would result in costs associated with one-time upgrades estimated at approximately ~\$2.7million and an estimated annual cost of \$190,000. The majority of the ~\$2.7million is not necessarily an immediate expense. Funding would need to be identified if Council decides to move forward with transferring maintenance.

Where is this item in its process?



Attachments:

- Draft Staff Presentation
- Survey Results

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, Senior Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council provide guidance on the options for Franklin Street Downtown. The final recommendation is dependent on what enhancements we would like to see on Franklin Street Downtown.