

CHAPEL HILL DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE AND LIGHTING MASTER PLAN

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landscape architecture + environmental art

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Introduction

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Chapel Hill commissioned Mikyoung Kim Design (MYKD) to develop a streetscape Master plan for downtown Chapel Hill. MYKD worked closely with the Town of Chapel Hill Public Works Department, Bartlett Tree Experts, RMF Engineering, the Town of Chapel Hill Engineering Department, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to develop a final Master Plan that emerged from an iterative planning process. This streetscape Master Plan assesses the current overall conditions of the paving and street surfaces, the lighting, and existing street trees. It also identifies core design directions for a long term vision plan to create a more unified and singular identity for this important historic district. Through this process, MYKD arrived at a master plan that envisions a revitalized streetscape that reflects the diverse cultural, artistic and intellectual aspects of this growing urban center.

Core Town Members and Design Team

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The Downtown of Chapel Hill represents a crossroads of the town’s diverse community and its intellectual and commercial livelihood. Together, Rosemary Street and Franklin Street thread a rich narrative through the town, from the green lawns of historic houses and restaurants on West Rosemary to the bustling sidewalks of East Franklin.

The Chapel Hill Streetscape and Lighting Master Plan aims to preserve the diverse narrative character of the streetscape while bringing together a consistent language that will unify the disparate areas of downtown. By defining the canopy and plantings and addressing the ground plane of sidewalks and crossings in a consistent way, these efforts can redefine Chapel Hill’s historic and stately character while preserving the diversity of the streetscape and its constituents.

The Streetscape Master Plan document on the following pages will first provide a brief historical background of Downtown Chapel Hill, followed by a site overview of the Downtown Area and its context, identifying existing conditions such as the presence of parks and open spaces, pedestrian and vehicular movement, and land use. The document will then delineate individual districts within Downtown for closer analysis.

Design initiatives for the streetscape, including plant materials, pedestrian experience, vehicular experience, cultural events and sustainable initiatives, will be described in Sections 5.0 through 13.0, followed by implementation and phasing strategies in Section 14.0. Finally, a glossary of terms and a series of appendices offer additional reference information, as well as standard details for the streetscape.

The Streetscape Master Plan is intended to offer a set of guidelines and strategies for developers and planners that can be applied to different areas of Downtown. These recommendations when applied to new construction and redevelopment projects will help to maintain a consistent identity for the Downtown streetscape.

