

Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS)  
Complete Streets Policy  
Approved: Effective: FY 2018 Projects

**NOTE: Suggested Revisions from Complete Streets Coalition National Office are noted in RED throughout this document**

**General Comments**

*If the intent of this document is to include bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities then a mandate for alternate transportation facilities should expressly say “shall” or “will” not “should”, “may”, “suggested” or “strongly encouraged”.*

This document represents the Complete Streets Policy for the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the greater Kalamazoo area.

- 1.0 Definition
- 2.0 Vision & Goals
- 3.0 Benefits
- 4.0 Link to Transportation Planning Processes
- 5.0 Applicability
- 6.0 Design
- 7.0 Implementation
- 8.0 Exception Process
- 9.0 Complete Streets Review Committee
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**1.0 Definition**

Complete Streets are roadways designed to safely and comfortably accommodate all users, of all ages and abilities, including but not limited to:

- motorists
- bicyclists
- wheelchair users
- pedestrians
- transit users
- school bus riders
- delivery and service personnel
- freight haulers
- emergency responders

## 1.1 Michigan Public Act 135 of 2010

**Complete Streets Definition:** “Roadways planned, designed, and constructed to provide appropriate access to all legal users in a manner that promotes safe and efficient movement of people and goods whether by car, truck, transit, assistive device, foot or bicycle.”

**Complete Streets Policy Definition:** “a document that provides guidance for the planning, design, and construction of roadways or an interconnected network of transportation facilities being constructed or reconstructed and designated for a transportation purpose that promotes complete streets...”

### **2.0 Visions and Goals**

*All users and modes: Indirectly addresses in definition in draft. However all modes and users are not explicitly defined, it's not clear what "everyone" refers to.*

### **2.0 Vision & Goals**

#### Vision

To create a safe, balanced, and effective transportation system where every user can travel safely and comfortably and where multi-modal transportation options are available to everyone.

#### Goals

- 1) To create a comprehensive, integrated, and connected transportation network that supports compact, sustainable development and provides livable communities.
- 2) To enhance safety, ease of use, and ease of transfer between modes for all users of the transportation system.
- 3) To provide flexibility for different types of streets, areas, and travelers to enhance the transportation experience.
- 4) Encourage a proactive and consistent approach to Complete Streets within the KATS area.

### **3.0 Benefits**

Building complete streets provides many benefits to residents, business owners, developers, and the community as a whole:

1. First and foremost, embracing the complete streets concept will help create balanced transportation systems, by:
  - a. Providing accessible, safe, and efficient connections between destinations
  - b. Bolstering economic growth and stability while increasing property values
  - c. Enhancing job growth
  - d. Improving safety, public health, and fitness
  - e. Reducing harmful emissions
  - f. Reducing the overall demand on our roadways by allowing people to replace motor vehicle trips with active transportation options
2. Secondly, integrating sidewalks, bike facilities, transit amenities, and safe crossings into the initial design of a project spares the expense and

complications of retrofits implemented at a later date.

3. Thirdly, proactively planning for a multimodal transportation system can promote integration with land use policies to encourage sustainable development.

#### **4.0 Links to Transportation Planning Process**

*Under network connectivity traffic calming devices (examples of which are curb extensions or bump outs, boulevards, hawks (pedestrian signalization)), speed tables for pedestrian crosswalks and speed humps are not mentioned yet needed on*

#### **4.0 Link to Transportation Planning Processes**

The KATS has developed this Complete Streets policy in response to:

1. Comments received through the Metropolitan Transportation Plan planning process,
2. Encouragement by the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and other stakeholder groups,
3. The adoption of PA 135 of 2010, and
4. All of the safety, health, environmental, and economic reasons stated above.

#### **4.1 Federal Policies**

The KATS Complete Streets Policy also supports compliance with Federal law [United States Code, Title 23, Chapter 2, Section 217 (23 USC 217)] requiring consideration for bicycling and walking within transportation infrastructure. FHWA also “encourages transportation agencies to go beyond the minimum requirements, and proactively provide convenient, safe, and context-sensitive facilities that foster increased use by bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities, and utilize universal design characteristics when appropriate. (US DOT Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations- 2010).”

As a Metropolitan Transportation Organization, KATS is to “carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process, including the development of a metropolitan transportation plan and a transportation improvement program (TIP), that encourages and promotes the safe and efficient development, management, and operation of surface transportation systems to serve the mobility needs of people and freight (including accessible pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) and foster economic growth and development, while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution(23 USC 450.300).”

Also understanding the importance of a Complete Street network, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) established policy in 2011 to allow for FTA funding of pedestrian and bicycling improvements near transit, noting that “walking, bicycling, and public transportation are complementary modes of transportation (“Final Policy Statement on the Eligibility of Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements under Federal Transit Law” Federal Register 76, August 19, 2011 p 52046-52053).”

#### **4.2 Long Range Transportation Planning**

Below are goals from the KATS 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan relevant to

## Complete Streets:

- Goal 1: Provide a Surface Transportation System Which Promotes the Efficient Movement of People, Goods, and Services, While Enhancing Economic Development.
- Goal 3: Increase the Accessibility and Mobility Options Available for People, Freight and Services.
- Goal 4: Improve Quality of Life of All Citizens by Protecting and Enhancing the Environment; Promote Sustainability and Livability Through Consistency Between Transportation Improvement and Local Planned Growth, Land Use, and Economic Development Patterns.
- Goal 5: Enhance the Integration and Connectivity of Different Transportation Modes for People and Freight.

### 4.3 Short-Range Transportation Planning

KATS recognizes that projects are programmed far in advance of design. During the course of project development unforeseeable changes can occur, municipalities and road agencies are encouraged to equitably review all elements of a proposed project prior to eliminating components due to budget constraints.

After KATS has committed funding to a project, KATS staff should be notified immediately of project scope changes, per the adopted KATS Amendment and Administrative Modification Policy.

## 5.0 Applicability

### 5.1 Jurisdiction

The recommendations and requirements within the KATS Complete Streets Policy will apply to all FHWA and FTA funded transportation projects within the Adjusted Census Urbanized Boundary (ACUB).

The KATS recognizes that some municipalities (state, cities, villages, and townships) and road agencies have adopted their own Complete Streets Policies. Any project that falls within the KATS MPA should apply the strictest regulations of any involved Complete Streets policy applicable to that jurisdiction.

Municipalities, transit agencies, and road agencies that have not adopted their own policies are strongly encouraged to do so. The KATS will foster partnerships with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), municipalities, transit agencies, road agencies, neighboring counties, and other entities to develop facilities that further the KATS Complete Streets Policy and continue such infrastructure beyond the KATS urbanized area boundary.

### 5.2 Projects

Every FHWA and FTA funded transportation improvement project should be

approached as an opportunity to create safer, more comfortable, more accessible roadways for all users.

The KATS Complete Streets Policy is applicable to the following types of projects:

FHWA	FTA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New roadways</li> <li>• Added travel lane(s)</li> <li>• Roadway reconstruction</li> <li>• Intersection reconstruction</li> <li>• Road rehabilitation</li> <li>• Reconstructed or heavily rehabilitated bridges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus Purchase</li> <li>• Bus Replacement</li> <li>• Facility Improvement</li> <li>• Station Improvement</li> </ul>

### 5.3 Minimum Network Connectivity

#### a. Existing Roadway Facilities

Projects that fall under this policy that already have a continuous sidewalk or multi-use path on at least one side of the roadway are considered to be compliant. Improvements to ensure good condition and ADA compliance are required.

#### b. No Existing Roadway Facilities

Projects that fall under this policy with no existing facilities will be required to include at least a continuous ADA-compliant sidewalk on both sides of the roadway/bridge. If the inclusion of a sidewalk is anticipated to be overly burdensome to the project and therefore infeasible, or there is not a demonstrated need, acceptable alternatives are:

- A wide paved shoulder (4ft or wider) or designated bicycle lanes within the roadway project
- A shared use path of a sufficient width to accommodate both pedestrian and bicycle travel simultaneously.

#### c. Existing or Immediately Planned Transit Facilities

Well planned and designed transit facilities provide safe, comfortable and intentional location for riders to access transit. They send a message to all street users that transit is a legitimate and viable form of transportation. During a funded project, it is expected that the transit facility will be updated to the appropriate level of amenities based on the context of the area.

#### d. Connecting Roadway Facilities to Transit

If the planned facility currently has fixed route transit, or is proposed to have fixed route transit in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan or an approved local plan, then the project sponsor shall request comments from any applicable local transit agency during the project development process to ensure that collaboration occurs with these agencies and that accommodation of transit vehicles and opportunities to access transit facilities are provided. Comments shall be included in funding application requests.

## **6.0 Design Guideline References**

*This section would benefit from including a few specific examples of design guidance.  
e.g. additional new trees needed.*

### **6.0 Design**

#### 6.1 Design Guideline References

KATS municipalities, transit agencies, and road agencies shall follow design standards required by the funding source. Design references are listed here for educational purposes only. It is understood that a local agency will use their best judgment to fit their user needs within their community's context.

Minimum connection requirements of this policy (paragraph 5.3) are not intended to supersede the best practices for design as referenced in this section.

Sources for design guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- American Association for State Highway and Transportation Officials: A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2011 or newer.
- American Association for State Highway and Transportation Officials: Guide for the Planning, Design, Operation of Pedestrian Facilities- July 2004 edition or newer.
- American Association for State Highway and Transportation Officials: Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities- Fourth Edition or newer.

#### 6.2 Context Sensitive Solutions

Complete Streets is a flexible and context sensitive process. The Context Sensitive Solution approach is a collaborative, interdisciplinary, holistic approach to the development of transportation projects. In recognition of context sensitivity, other appropriate design standards may be considered, provided that a comparable level of safety for all users is present.

## **7.0 Implementation**

*Implementation next steps: It would benefit from explicitly outlining what policies and procedures would be reviewed to effectively implement the policy (it only mentions subdivision regulations). It would also benefit from setting goals for performance measures and explaining how the policy will affect future funding priorities.*

### **7.0 Implementation**

#### 7.1 KATS Staff Support

Due to the flexibility of the policy and the variety of approaches that a municipality or road agency may take to complete a street, KATS staff, as stewards of the Complete Streets Policy, will work with the municipality or road agency throughout the process to find a context sensitive solution for both parties.

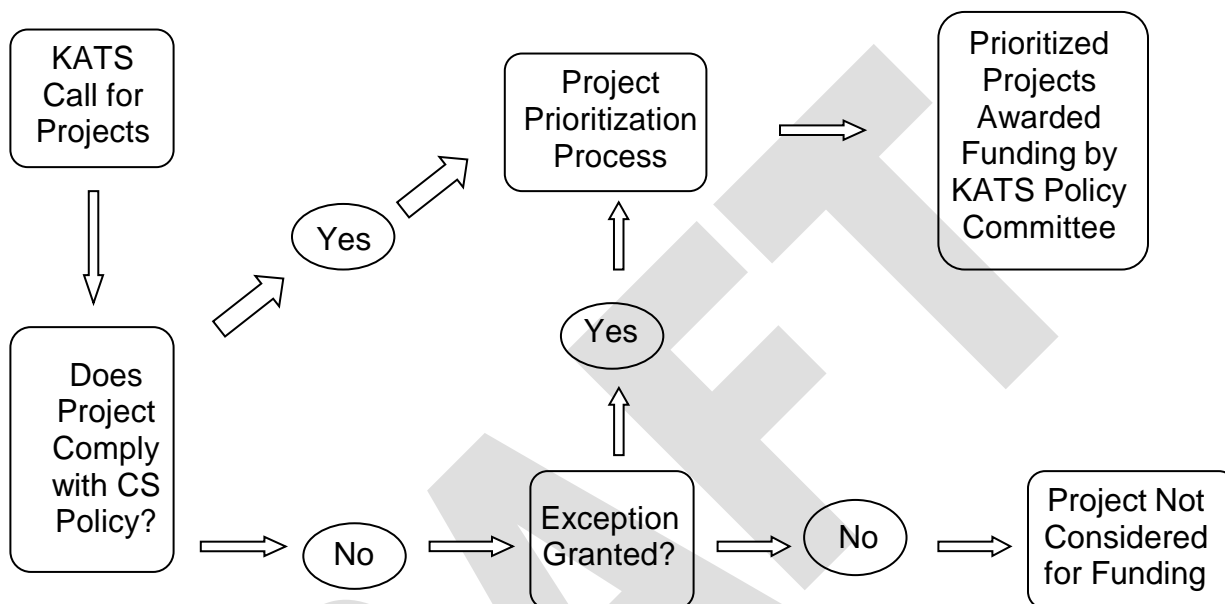
#### 7.2 Project Selection and Prioritization

During Transportation Improvement Program project selection, projects will first be evaluated for compliance with this Complete Streets Policy. Projects will then be

prioritized according to procedures in place prior to the effective date of this policy.

Requests for exceptions will be reviewed either administratively or through the KATS Complete Streets Review Committee according to section 8.0 Exception Process of this policy. Projects found not in compliance with this policy, or for which an exception request is denied, will not be included in the KATS Prioritization Process.

### 7.3 Process Flow Chart



### 7.4 Continuing Support

As a part of implementing this regional Complete Streets policy, KATS encourages municipalities and agencies to:

- Notify and maintain regular communication with relevant departments, agencies, and committees within their jurisdictions when planning for transportation facilities;
- Review current design standards, including subdivision regulations which apply to new roadway construction, to ensure that they reflect the best available design standards and guidelines, and effectively implement the regional Complete Streets policy;
- Promote inter-departmental project coordination among local agency departments with an interest in the activities that occur within the public right-of-way in order to better use fiscal resources;
- Include an educational component to ensure that all users of the transportation system understand and can safely utilize Complete Streets project elements; and
- Consider the creation of a local Complete Streets policy to apply to all non-KATS supported projects. Local policies established after the effective date of the KATS Complete Streets Policy should strive to equal or exceed the requirements herein.

## **8.0 Exception Process**

*Clear, accountable exceptions: outlines a well-defined process, but the non-administrative exceptions are too broad, especially since only municipalities and agencies are represented on the committee approving those (and potentially other) exceptions*

*Why is an administrative exemption granted by staff?*

### **8.0 Exception Process**

If a project cannot meet the Complete Streets Policy, the municipality, transit agency, or road agency may request an exception. Exception requests will be initially reviewed and sorted by KATS staff. Administrative Exceptions may be granted or referred to the

KATS Complete Streets Review Committee by KATS staff. KATS staff reserves the right to abstain from the decision and pass the case on to the KATS Complete Streets Review Committee where there may be issues of ambiguity or real or potential public controversy.

Applicants may appeal an Administrative decision to the KATS Complete Streets Review Committee. Non-Administrative or appealed Administrative Exception decisions will be made by the KATS Complete Streets Review Committee (9.0 Complete Streets Review Committee).

An exception to the KATS Complete Streets Policy is not an exception to any additional design policies of The Michigan Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, or Federal Highway Administration.

Projects which propose to diminish, degrade, or remove existing non-motorized facilities will automatically be considered a violation of this policy. Such requests can only proceed as a Non-Administrative Exception to be reviewed by the Complete Streets Review Committee. Exceptions are divided into Administrative Exceptions and Non- Administrative Exceptions as listed below.

#### **8.1 Administrative Exceptions**

Exceptions may be considered for approval by KATS staff when:

- An affected roadway prohibits, by law, specified users (such as an interstate freeways or pedestrian malls), in which case a greater effort shall be made to accommodate those specified users elsewhere, including on roadways that cross or otherwise intersect with the affected roadway (e.g. bridge decks reconstructed over the Interstate and underpasses under reconstructed/new interchanges).
- The activities are ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g. spot repair or crack seal), which meet MDOT's ADA upgrade exceptions.
- Capital preventive maintenance projects where the roadwork is not substantial enough to recognize costs savings by including the non-motorized element, e.g. thin overlays (less than 2"), micro-seals, chip seals, slurry seals.
- The type of federal project does not have a substantial impact the roadway,



- e.g. signal upgrades, addition of turning lanes, signal interconnect projects.
- Safety projects which are funded only for specific safety features identified by crash patterns, due to the funding parameters of the program.
- Approved or adopted plans or policies (such as local or regional land use, zoning, connectivity planning), or present and anticipated market condition indicate an absence of need, including future need, for multimodal facilities such as in instances of existing and anticipated continuance of sparse population.

## 8.2 Non-Administrative Exceptions

Exceptions may be considered for approval by the KATS Complete Streets Review Committee when:

- Improvements required in compliance with this Complete Streets Policy would be in jeopardy of removal or destruction soon after their installation due to near- future planned projects in same area.
- Applying Complete Streets principles to a project is inappropriate because it would be contrary to public safety or unduly cost prohibitive (e.g. If the addition of facilities for other modes would increase the cost so as to endanger the ability to secure local funds, would result in the significant expansion of a project schedule, or would create significant impacts to environmental, topographical, cultural or historic resources that cannot be reasonably mitigated). The Complete Streets Review Committee will recognize MDOT Complete Street Implementation guidelines regarding overly burdensome costs as an exception.
- A municipality's ordinance(s) would require the future installation of facilities as development occurs. To clarify, an exception may be considered if, according to local regulations, developers of property planned for future development along project corridors would be required to install the required sidewalk or multi-use path and coordinate with transit providers. This exception should not be applied piecemeal, creating gaps in service in anticipation of unscheduled future development; it would only apply if the majority of those served by the facility would come from future development on planned or zoned land, unless the project is identified in the KATS non-motorized plan as a priority project.

### **9.0 Complete Streets Review Committee**

*Composition of Complete Streets Review Committee needs to reflect all users served. There needs to be a representative from the bicycling, pedestrian, transit and disabled community on the task force to serve on the Review Committee.*

### **9.0 Complete Streets Review Committee**

The Complete Streets Review Committee will meet as needed to review the Non-Administrative or Appealed Administrative Exception Requests. All Review Committee meetings will be open to the public, pursuant to the Open Meetings Act.

### 9.1 Membership

The Complete Streets Review Committee shall be made up of five (5) people who are members of and appointed by the KATS's Technical Committee for two-year terms, in accordance with the Technical Committee by-laws. Members may be reappointed for successive terms.

A single agency shall have no more than one (1) representative. At a minimum, one (1) member will represent a municipality; one (1) member will represent a road agency; and one (1) member will represent a transit organization. This Review Committee shall be supported by KATS staff. Review Committee members who are unable to attend a meeting may send their alternate, as listed on file with KATS (updated annually). It is recommended that members appointed by the KATS Technical Committee have a firm understanding of complete streets and have a direct impact on their agencies project selection and design.

### 9.2 Voting Membership

The voting membership consists of five (5) technical representatives, representing municipalities, transit agencies, and road agencies. Two (2) additional technical representatives will be designated as alternates, to serve on the Review Committee if a conflict of interest should occur.

### 9.3 Requests for Exception

KATS staff will review the exception requests initially and provide a report with recommendations to the Review Committee in advance of each meeting. The applicant will have the opportunity to review the report and add comments to it prior to its submittal to the Review Committee. The KATS website will provide 7-days advance notice of the date of the scheduled Complete Streets Review Committee Meeting and it shall be open to both the applicants and the public for review and comment. During each meeting, the Review Committee shall discuss and evaluate the request(s), suggest revisions where appropriate, and vote on a recommendation.

### 9.4 Quorum

A quorum on the Complete Streets Review Committee shall consist of at least three (3) voting members. Members with conflicts of interest on a particular project before the Review Committee must recuse themselves from deliberation on that project, and the appropriate alternate will vote in their place. Recusal shall be noted in advance so the appropriate alternate can attend.

### 9.5 Decision Appeal

In the event that the municipality, transit agency, or road agency disagrees with the action of the Complete Streets Review Committee, the municipality or road agency may appeal to the KATS Policy Committee for a final review of their exception request.

## **10.0 Evaluation and Performance Measures**

*Standards need to be set and outcomes measured*

*Measurement benchmarks are needed in network connectivity*

*Need additional numeric benchmarks*

- *Total miles of bike lanes/trails built or striped*
- *Linear feet of new pedestrian accommodation*
- *Number of ADA accommodations built*
- *Compliments and complaints*
- *Bicycle, Pedestrian and Multimodal Levels of Service (LOS) needed*
- *Transportation mode shift, provided by the Household Travel Survey*

### **10.0 Evaluation and Performance Measures**

#### Annual Report of Exceptions

All exceptions will be kept on record and made publicly available. Notification will be provided to the KATS Policy Committee. The KATS shall submit an annual report to the KATS Policy Committee summarizing all exceptions granted in the preceding year.

#### Triennial Evaluation

KATS shall, at a minimum, evaluate this policy and the documents associated with it every three years during the Transportation Improvement Program development cycle. This evaluation may include recommendations for amendments to this Policy.

#### Performance Measures

Baseline data will be collected the year of the policy's adoption. KATS staff will report to the Policy Committee on the triennial increase or decrease for each performance measure listed below, compared to the previous year(s), in order to evaluate the success of this Complete Streets policy.

- Total miles of marked bike lanes, wide paved shoulder, and shared use pathways built or painted, as a whole or as a percentage of the system
- Linear feet of new, updated, or repaired sidewalk
- Number of new curb ramps installed or upgraded
- Crosswalk and intersection improvements, and other safety elements
- Number of transit stops accessible via sidewalks and curb ramps
- Rate of crashes, injuries, and fatalities by mode
- Number of approved and denied exceptions