

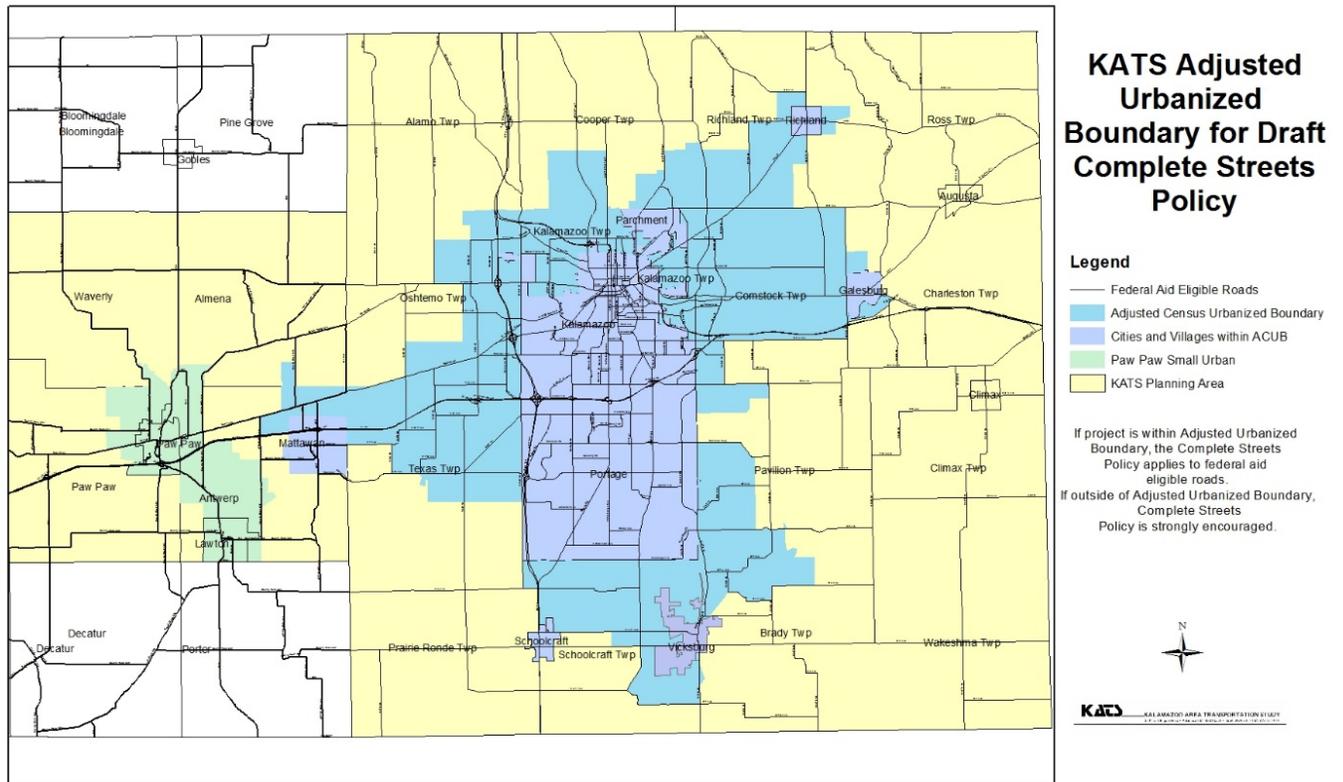
Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS)
Complete Streets Policy
Approved: TBD
Effective: FY 2018 Projects

This document represents the Complete Streets Policy for the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the greater Kalamazoo area. As a Metropolitan Planning Organization, KATS is responsible to prepare plans and allocate available Federal transportation funding to road, public transit, and non-motorized projects to best benefit the Transportation System in the greater Kalamazoo area.

The purpose of this policy is to have all parties, KATS staff, municipalities, townships, road agencies, public transit agencies, and the public review projects as they are being planned so that needed improvements can be included in the total project scope. Once local projects are included in the KATS Transportation Improvement Program with federal funding, these dollars are difficult to change.

This policy will apply to those projects proposed for federal funding by local agencies within the adjusted census urban boundary. This urban area includes the cities of Galesburg, Kalamazoo, Parchment, and Portage; the villages of Mattawan, Richland, Schoolcraft, and Vicksburg, and all or portions of Almena, Antwerp, Brady, Comstock, Cooper, Kalamazoo, Pavilion, Oshtemo, Richland, Schoolcraft, and Texas townships as indicated in the map below.

Projects proposed for federal funding will be evaluated on a planning level to determine if, within the context of the project, while referring to local plans containing non-motorized elements and the KATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan, there is a need to consider non-motorized, pedestrian, and/or transit improvements in conjunction with the project. There is an exception process for projects that will be considered during the evaluation as well. All available federal funding sources will be utilized to maximize the federal funding utilized in the KATS area. The ACUB does not include the Paw Paw Small Urban area (shaded in green) or the remaining KATS Planning Area (jurisdictions and portions shaded in yellow).



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1.0 Definitions

Complete Streets are roadways designed to safely and comfortably accommodate all legal 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 and meets the following requirements: (i) Is sensitive to the local context and recognizes that needs vary according to urban, suburban, and rural settings. (ii) Considers the functional class of the roadway and project costs and allows for appropriate exemptions. (iii) Considers the varying mobility needs of all legal users of the roadway, of all ages and abilities.”

1.2 MDOT Definition

Context Sensitive Solutions/Approach (CSS)-MDOT Definition: Is a collaborative interdisciplinary approach to developing transportation projects. Under CSS, MDOT solicits dialogue with local governments, road commissions, industry groups, land use advocates, and state agencies early in a project’s planning phase. A cooperative spirit and an awareness of community interests help achieve the ultimate goal- projects that fit their surroundings while effectively serving transportation needs.

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 and increase their combined efficiency and effectiveness.
4. To maximize the use of federal funds to make strategic investments in our area’s transportation system.
5. To provide greater capacity during times of emergency.
6. To 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 and better enable improved individual opportunity, sustainable community development and economic success.

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, FHWA regulations requires KATS 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, transit agencies and road agencies are encouraged to 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 of project scope changes, in accordance with 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), beginning with the stated effective date of FY 2018 projects within the FY 2017 to 2020 Transportation Improvement Program.

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. KATS also recognizes the importance of locally adopted plans containing non-motorized elements and the KATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan in identifying priority or alternative routing options when applying this Policy.

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. This policy does not supersede or void any municipality or agency permitting policies or other requirements.

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. All such projects will be considered in accordance with a context sensitive approach¹. A process shall provide for exceptions, where final determination of a request for exception can be made by the KATS Policy Committee (Section 8.0).

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

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

5.3 Minimum Network Connectivity

a. Existing Roadway Facilities

Since Complete Streets is an approach that considers the needs of all users, it follows that projects that fall under this Policy will typically be considered to be compliant when they already meet the context of the area and the needs of the users. Examples of existing infrastructure that may meet the context of the area include:

- A continuous sidewalk on at least one side of the roadway; or,

¹ Factors such as, but not limited to, planned residential subdivisions, commercial development, usage trends and school building projects, and others will play a part in determining whether the existing or planned roadway facility meets the needs of the users.

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

Given the context sensitive approach, improvements to ensure good condition and compliance with current design and ADA standards for those facilities are required. Locally adopted plans containing non-motorized elements along with the KATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan will also be relied upon for determining what will be considered a compliant existing facility.

b. No Existing Roadway Facilities

If no existing non-motorized facilities are present, the road agency is to submit to KATS, within the appropriate section of the Project Application, commitments relative to planned context sensitive design activities, including proposed complete streets elements.

Examples of design activities that may meet the context of the area include:

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

KATS also recognizes the importance of locally adopted plans containing non-motorized elements and the KATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan in identifying priority or alternative routing options when considering context sensitive design activities where there is no existing facility.

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. Amenities to be considered include shelters for waiting passengers and provisions that increase safety when embarking and disembarking.

d. Connecting Roadway Facilities to Transit

If the planned street or road facility currently has fixed route transit, or is proposed to have fixed route transit in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan or an approved local plan containing non-motorized elements, 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

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, 6th 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

This Complete Streets Policy shall be implemented using a flexible and context sensitive approach. As defined earlier, 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 that meets the needs of all users. The context sensitive approach shall apply as an overarching consideration to all projects, including those referred to explicitly in Section 5.2 and Section 5.3, with support from KATS staff in a cooperative manner, as outlined in Section 7.1.

7.0 Implementation

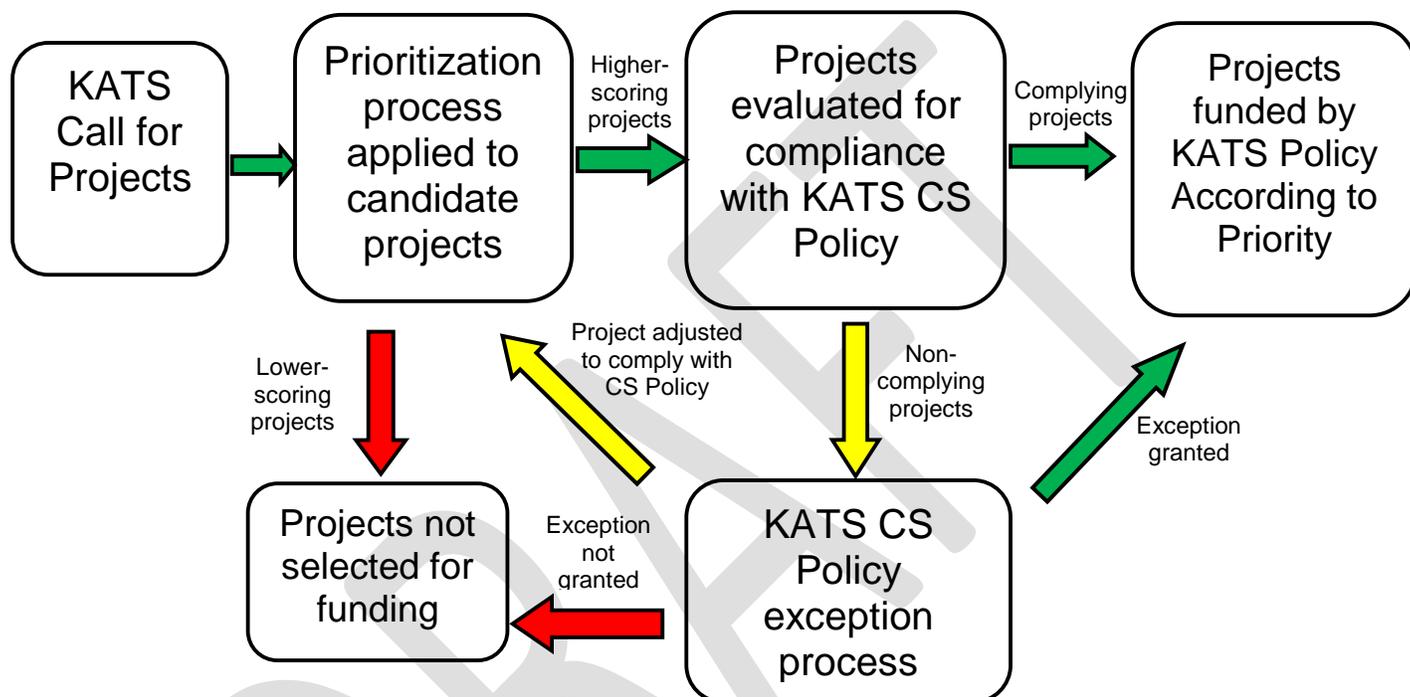
7.1 KATS Staff Support

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 will work with the municipality, transit agency, or road agency throughout the process to find a context sensitive solution.

7.2 Project Selection and Prioritization

During Transportation Improvement Program project selection, projects will first be prioritized using the most current prioritization procedures approved by the KATS Policy Committee. After the project list is ordered according to priority, candidate projects will then be evaluated for compliance with this Complete Streets Policy. Projects found not to comply with this Complete Streets Policy will be considered for an exception, as described in Section 8.0, Exception Process of this Policy. Projects found not in compliance with the Policy, and/or for which an exception is not granted, will not be submitted to the KATS Policy Committee for funding.

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

If a project cannot meet the Complete Streets Policy, the municipality, transit agency, or road agency may request an exception. The process of applying for an exception is intended to be simple, efficient and fair. Further, the process shall be refined as experience is gained so that the process will not be any more burdensome than comparable processes used by local agencies involved in transportation planning.

Exception requests shall be submitted on the TIP Call for Projects Application. Exceptions may be granted at any of the three levels described in this section.

There shall be three levels of review; each shall be followed in the sequence described below, with the possibility of an exception being granted at each level. The first level of the process is an administrative review provided by KATS staff; the second level of review is provided by the KATS Technical Committee; the third level of review is provided by the KATS Policy Committee. The three opportunities for exceptions within the process only further emphasize the flexibility within the Policy.

Exception requests will be initially reviewed and sorted by KATS staff. Administrative Exceptions may be granted at this level or referred to the KATS Technical Committee by KATS staff. KATS staff reserves the right to abstain from the decision and pass the case on to the KATS Technical Committee where there may be issues of ambiguity or real or potential public controversy. All projects, even those with Administrative Exceptions, will be referred to the KATS Technical Committee for review and/or action.

Applicants may appeal an Administrative decision to the KATS Technical Committee. Non-Administrative or appealed Administrative Exception decisions will be made by the KATS Technical Committee. If an exception is not granted by the KATS Technical Committee, the request will be automatically forwarded to the KATS Policy Committee for a final decision.

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, as contrary to the policy's basic intent. Such requests can only proceed as a Non-Administrative Exception to be reviewed by the KATS Technical 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).

- An alternative route is identified in a locally adopted plan containing non-motorized elements or within the KATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- 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 on the roadway, e.g. signal upgrades, addition of turning lanes, signal interconnect projects, which do not remove existing non-motorized or transit facilities.
- 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 Technical 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). KATS Technical 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 Evaluation and Performance Measures

9.1 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.

9.2 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.

9.3 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