

CITY OF KALAMAZOO

STREET DESIGN MANUAL



NOVEMBER 2021



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The project team thanks the Advisory Committee Members for their involvement, insights, and engagement in developing the City of Kalamazoo Street Design Manual

Technical Committee Members

- Dan Baisden, City of Kalamazoo
- Nolan Bergstrom, City of Kalamazoo
- Anna Crandall, City of Kalamazoo
- Paul Ecklund, Disability Network- Southwest Michigan
- Rebekah Kik, City of Kalamazoo
- Sohil Manjijyani, City of Kalamazoo
- Derek Nofz, CMS Energy
- Dennis Randolph, City of Kalamazoo
- Eric Sajtar, City of Kalamazoo
- Kathy Schultz, Metro
- Steve Skalski, City of Kalamazoo
- Steve Stepek, Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
- Rich Voorman, Complete Streets Advisory Committee member

City of Kalamazoo Core Project Staff

- Christina Anderson, City Planner, Department of Community Planning & Economic Development
- Anthony Ladd, Assistant Director, Public Works Division Manager
- Dennis Randolph, Traffic Engineer, Department of Public Services

Consultants

- Janet Attarian, Senior Mobility Strategist, Smithgroup
- Caeley Hynes, Planner, SmithGroup
- Oliver Kiley, Landscape Architect, SmithGroup
- Jackie Young, Civil Engineer, SmithGroup

SMITHGROUP



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

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1.1 STREET DESIGN MANUAL OVERVIEW

PURPOSE OF THE STREET DESIGN MANUAL

The Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 Master Plan provides a comprehensive vision for the City, based on extensive community engagement and input. One of the central strategic themes in the city’s vision was for a **Connected City - A city that is networked for walking, biking, riding, and driving.**

Critical to achieving the Connected City vision is the need to plan, design, and build **complete streets** that serve all members of the community equitably and enhance the resilience and sustainability of the city.

This manual gives both the public and private sector design standards and best practices for building and managing complete streets. It addresses the key roles of the street and the public right-of-way in supporting multiple modes of transportation, economic vitality, environmental health, and community character.

What are “Streets?”

Streets, for purposes of this manual, are defined as the entire public right-of-way between buildings (not just the vehicle roadway). Streets includes the roadway and travel lanes, parking lanes, the amenity zone (between the curb and sidewalk) sidewalks, and public alleys.

WHY HAVE A STREET DESIGN MANUAL?

Every street in Kalamazoo has its own personality and needs based on the residents, businesses, travelers, and activities occurring along the street corridor. Each street is also part of the public realm and must protect the health, safety, and comfort of all street users to the extent possible. When streets are identified for maintenance or other infrastructure projects, there is an opportunity to strengthen the performance of public streets and better support the health of the community.

A street design manual provides best practices and consistency in how streets are designed, built, and maintained. Clear standards and guidance supports a more robust and transparent decision-making process, and ensures that public infrastructure investments are well-aligned with community values and needs.

The following principles underpin this design manual:

- » **Values: Ensure that street designs are aligned with community values and adjacent land uses**
- » **Process: Establish a defensible and transparent process for street design and decision-making**
- » **Consistency: Utilize consistent street design practices and methods**

WHO SHOULD USE THE STREET DESIGN MANUAL?

While the street design manual is primarily a technical resource, it is anticipated to be accessible and usable by a broader audience. This includes the following:

- City staff, consultants, and partner agencies as they work to plan, design, engineer, construct, and maintain streets and public infrastructure.
- Private developers or utility providers with projects that impact the public right-of-way.
- Residents, business owners, and other members of the public that want to understand and/or advocate for improvements to public streets.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STREET DESIGN MANUAL

The street design manual consists of the following chapters:

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

Provides an overview of the design manual purpose, as well as key terms and concepts governing the usage of the manual.

CHAPTER 2: Street Typology Framework

Describes the typology framework, which is a guiding plan depicting the organization of the streets across the City of Kalamazoo into distinct typologies that govern the character, function, and design of the street.

CHAPTER 3: Street Design Process

Provides design and decision-making tools governing street design projects in order to provide consistency and transparency in the process.

CHAPTER 4: Street Design Elements

Contains detailed guidance for individual physical design elements within the roadway.



KEY TERMS

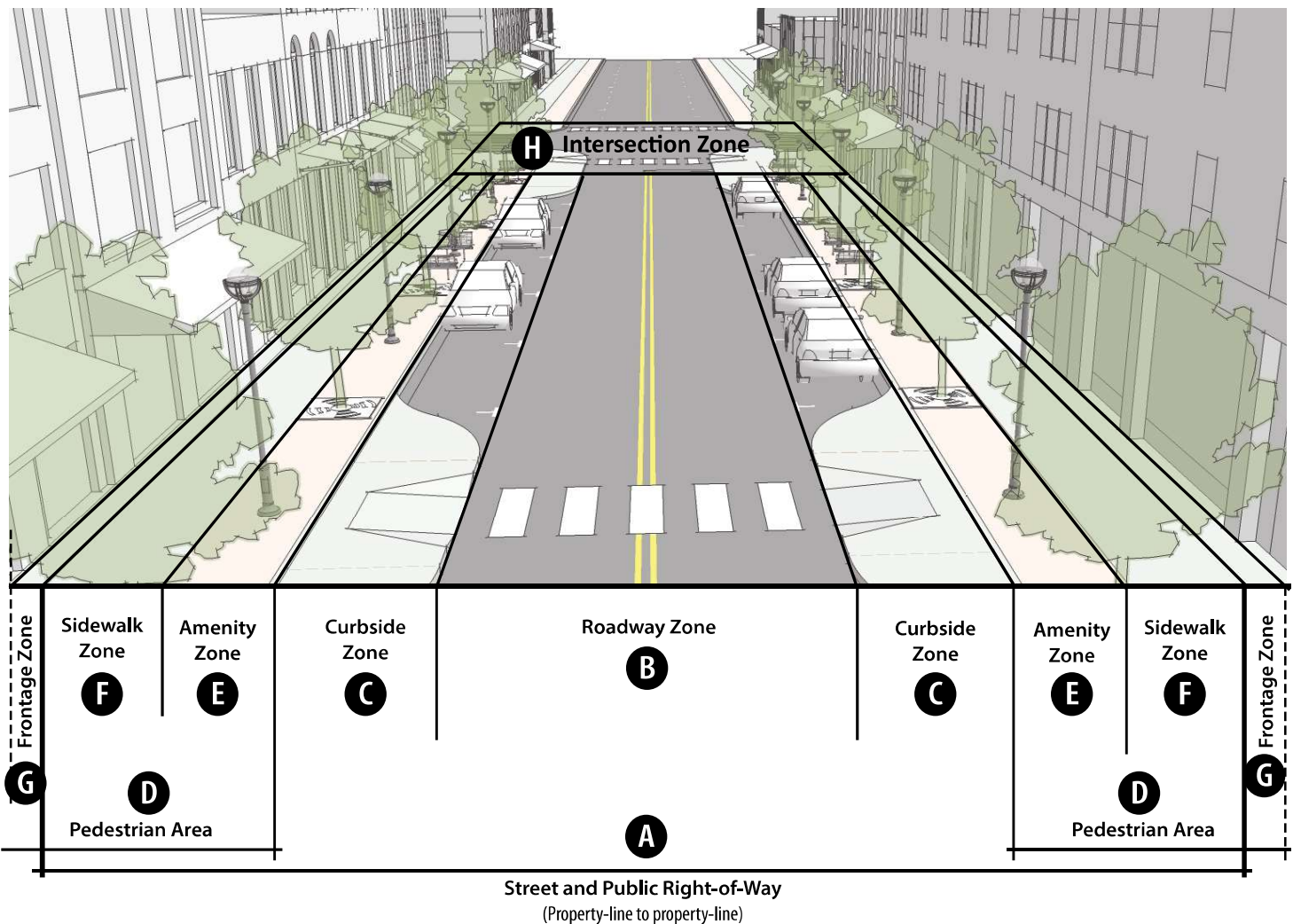
Zones of the Street

The Kalamazoo Street Design Manual uses a number of terms throughout the document for describing the street environment and its qualities and functions.

A street is comprised of a number of zones that affect the uses and functions of the street, and relate to what “design elements” (see box on next page) may be applicable to areas of the street. Street zones include the following:

- A Right-Of-Way:** Publicly owned property where streets are located and is defined by adjacent property lines.
- B Roadway:** The central portion of the street typically dedicated to travel lanes for vehicle, transit, and bicycle movement.
- C Curbside Zone:** Area adjacent to the curb and commonly used for on-street parking and loading.
- D Pedestrian Area:** This is the area between the curb and the outside edge of the public right-of-way and private property line. The Pedestrian Area encompasses the Amenity Zone, Sidewalk, and Frontage Zone.
- E Amenity Zone:** Area between the sidewalk and the curb. Commonly the location for street trees, light poles, road signs, and other street furnishings.
- F Sidewalk Zone:** A clear, consistent, paved area dedicated to pedestrian movement. Outer edge of the sidewalk typically at the public right-of-way line. Sometimes referred to as simply the “sidewalk.”
- G Frontage Zone:** Area between the public right-of-way (property line) and building faces. In some cases this zone may be used as additional public pedestrian space.
- H Intersection Zone:** The intersection zone occurs where two streets meet.

Figure 1.1.1 - Street Zones



What are “Design Elements?”

A design element is a specific built feature or other physical amenity that is located in the street. The applicability of design elements to streets relate to the street’s typology (refer to Chapter 2) and street zone.

Design elements broadly include, but are not limited, to the following types of features:

- Travel surfaces and use zones, such as sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and vehicles lanes.
- Special uses like curbside parking, loading zones, sidewalk occupancy, and bus stops.
- Intersection treatments and traffic controls (signs and signals)
- Streetscape amenities like trees, planters, lighting, and seating.
- Utility and infrastructure features, like fire hydrants and stormwater management facilities.



Source: NYC.gov



Source: NYC.gov



Source: NYC DOT



1.2 PLAN ALIGNMENT

RELEVANT KALAMAZOO PLANS & POLICIES

The Imagine Kalamazoo process led to the creation of the 2017 Strategic Vision and 2025 Master Plan, which collectively identifies a broad range of priorities, initiatives, policy proposals, and other efforts that will position Kalamazoo as an equitable, resilient, and sustainable place to live, work, and recreate.

The Vision Alignment diagram (right) shows the relationship between these key planning activities and decision-making within the city. The Strategic Vision provides overarching goals, while the 2025 Master Plan focuses on land use and transportation objectives at a city-wide scale. The Capital Improvement Project (CIP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and annual budgets provide funding resources for plan and project implementation.

The 2025 Master Plan recognizes the critical role the city's transportation systems and connectivity networks play in making the city a safe and comfortable place where people of all ages and abilities are able to access destinations using different modes of transportation.

Critically, the physical design of streets and how different modes of travel move through and use the street grid is important for achieving the city's overall goals and aspirations. This street design has been assembled in alignment with adopted city goals and policies, and will be a critical tool for realizing the city's goals.

This section provides an overview of relevant city documents and policies that have a bearing on street design, as well identifying state and national design guidance and best practices that is alignment with Kalamazoo's goals.

Vision Alignment 10 : 5 : 1



*Plans are reviewed every five years for accomplishment & relevance. If deemed necessary, an update process would be used to adjust the plans.

City Strategy, Vision, and Master Plans

The Kalamazoo Street Design Manual builds on and compliments the goals, objectives, and intent of many existing plans developed and adopted by the City of Kalamazoo. These include:

- **Imagine Kalamazoo.** The outreach to establish a comprehensive vision of Kalamazoo for the next 10 years was formed through the 16 month-long Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 planning process. This planning process was centered around three themes: Connected & Accessible Community, Equity & Opportunity for All, and Vibrant & Friendly Environment.
 - » **Kalamazoo Strategic Vision (2017).** The first document to result from the Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 planning process was the city’s Strategic Vision. The Strategic Vision guides the work of the city, both internally and externally to represent the community’s needs. It shapes all plans created by the city, including the master plan, as a means to implement the community’s vision.
 - » **Kalamazoo 2025 Master Plan (2017).** The master plan shapes the city’s future built environment by supporting growth and development, preserving Kalamazoo’s unique character, and enhancing Kalamazoo’s neighborhoods. This document primarily focuses on city-wide land development and transportation issues.
 - » **Kalamazoo Neighborhood Plans (on-going).** These plans give specific direction on where, what, and when goals/actions are implemented in each geographic area. These plans aim to define what a complete neighborhood means in Kalamazoo and corresponding goals that can be realized.
 - » **Sustainability Strategy (2021).** Environmental responsibility is one of ten main goals in the city’s Strategic Vision, expanded upon in the 2025 Master Plan. In an effort to progress towards this goal, city staff, stakeholders, and community partners are working to create a sustainability strategy which will incorporate Imagine Kalamazoo @ Work action items, past climate studies, global protocols, best practices, and resident input.
- » **Parks and Recreation Plan (2019).** The City of Kalamazoo has developed this five-year parks and recreation master plan after engaging in a process of inventory, analysis, and public input collection. This plan is a road map for the parks and recreation decisions to be made over the next five years.
- » **Kalamazoo Stormwater Management Plan (2021).** The Stormwater Management Plan regulates various city infrastructure needs, including balancing clean stormwater drainage, properly managing municipal operations such as street sweeping and winter road management, storm sewer infrastructure maintenance and cleaning, and public education and outreach.
- » **Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study (2017-2018).** The Linkages Study aims to improve safety and operations for all users on Stadium Drive, Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo Avenue, Westnedge Avenue, Park Street, and Michikal Street (I-94 BL/US-131 BR/M-43), and provide an integrated transportation network to support economic and quality of life benefits.
- » **Kalamazoo Public Participation Plan and Engagement Toolkit (on-going).** Developed alongside the Imagine Kalamazoo engagement process. Establishes the importance of meaningful engagement in all decisions that affect people’s lives.
- » **Downtown and Adjacent Street Network:** Following the PEL and the jurisdictional transfer of key streets in and around Downtown from the MDOT (Michigan Department of Transportation), the City is working to plan, budget, and design updates to the street network, including converting the one-way streets to two way, and making the streets safe and comfortable for all users.

City Policies

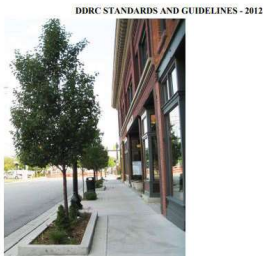
The Kalamazoo Street Design Manual advances other policies, resolutions, and initiatives underway including the resolution proclaiming the City of Kalamazoo’s commitment to complete streets and multi-modal safety. Notable policies include:

- **Vision Zero:** The 2025 Master Plan recognized Vision Zero as an approach to consider for improving transportation safety for all users. No formal policy has been adopted. Vision Zero calls for the elimination of all transportation related fatalities and severe injury.
- **Housing for All:** The Housing for All initiative is an effort to provide resources to construct and preserve quality, affordable, housing that responds to our community’s vision described through Imagine Kalamazoo. This fund is intended to provide loan gap funding for affordable housing projects in the City of Kalamazoo.
- **Kalamazoo Complete Streets Policy & Coalition:** The Complete Streets Policy is intended to provide for safe and convenient access to all parts of the city by respecting the needs, capabilities and limitations of all users of city rights-of-way, including but not limited to pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, motorists, emergency, freight, and commercial vehicle operators. The policy aligns street design, reconstruction, and maintenance with the street typologies presented within this document.
- **Kalamazoo Complete Streets Advisory Committee:** The Complete Streets Policy establishes an advisory committee made up of advocates, residents, and a planning commissioner. This committee is responsible for reviewing best practices, education and outreach, and recommending priorities for street projects.

DESIGN STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

The Kalamazoo Street Design Manual utilizes national best practices, design guidance, and local standards and regulations to ensure that street projects improve the safety, comfort, and access for all users of the streets. Throughout this document, design direction or recommendations may refer to any of the following documents for further detail and clarity for how they are to be implemented in accordance with best practice.

- **Local Standards & Guidelines**
 - » **Accessible Sidewalk Requirements:** includes introduction, transition plan, definitions, applicability, standards for accessibility, bus stops, accessible pedestrian signals, on-street parking.
- **State Standards & Guidelines**
 - » **Michigan Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD) (2013):** Specifies the design, installation, and use standards for traffic signs, road surface markings, and signals.
 - » **MDOT – Bicycle and Pedestrian Resources for Transportation Professionals (2016):** A resource with the latest research, resources, and guidance on pedestrian and bicycle planning, safety, and design.
 - » **MDOT – Best Design Practices for Walking and Bicycling in Michigan:** A toolbox of non-motorized improvements that have been shown to reduce crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists.



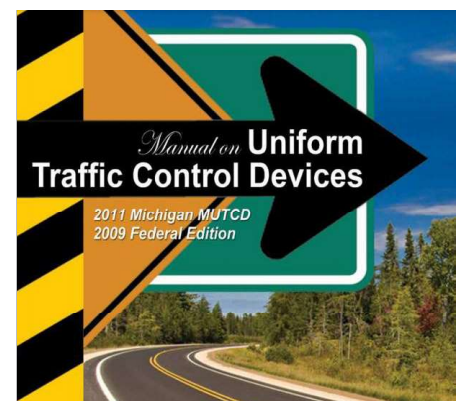
DDRC STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES - 2012
DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW
Standards and Guidelines
STREETSCAPE

Kalamazoo, MI
July 2012



Best Design Practices for
Walking and Bicycling
in Michigan

Michigan Department of Transportation

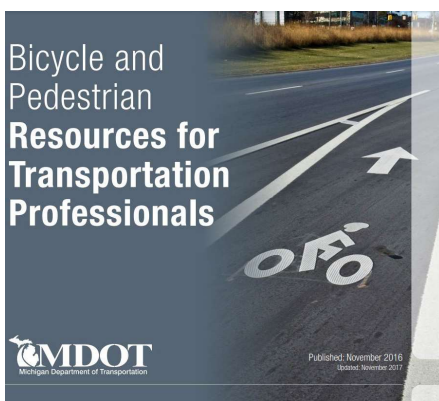
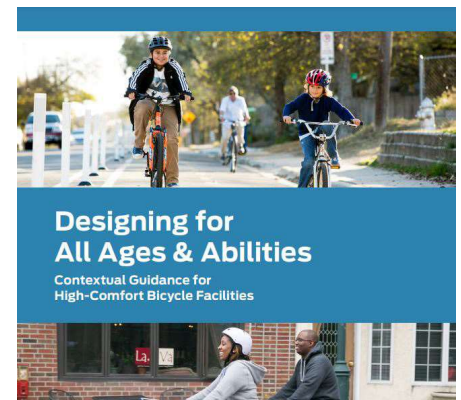
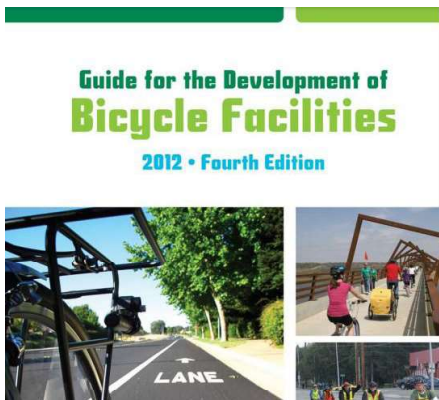


Manual on Uniform
Traffic Control Devices

2011 Michigan MUTCD
2009 Federal Edition

- **National Guidelines & Design Resources**

- » **NACTO – Urban Bikeway Design Guide (2014):** Guidelines for bicycle infrastructure including lanes, cycle tracks, intersection treatments, signals, signage, bicycle boulevards.
- » **AASHTO – Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (2012):** Information on accommodating bicycle travel and operations in most riding environments.
- » **NACTO – Urban Street Design Guide (2013):** Principles and practices of designing safe, multi-modal streets.
- » **NACTO – Transit Street Design Guide (2014):** Guidance for the development of transit facilities on city streets.
- » **FHWA – Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide (2015):** Planning considerations for separated bicycle lanes, including a menu of design options covering typical one and two-way scenarios.
- » **FWHA – Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks (2016):** A resource for applying national design guidelines in a rural setting and highlights small town and rural case studies.
- » **NACTO – Designing for All Ages and Abilities (2017):** Facility selection guide for a wide variety of urban street types to allow planners to determine how to best combine traffic calming tools to reduce fatalities and increase cycling rates and comfort.
- » **FHWA – Bikeway Selection Guide (2019):** A resource to help transportation planners make informed trade-off decisions relating to selection of bikeway types, focusing on safety.
- » **NACTO – Urban Street Stormwater Guide (2017):** National best practices for sustainable stormwater management in the public right-of-way.
- » **NACTO - Don't Give Up at the Intersection (2019):** Provides design guidance on safe bike and pedestrian intersection treatments, such as protected corners.



ORGANIZATIONS

A number of public organizations and other entities have a role or interaction in the design and management of streets and are referenced throughout the Kalamazoo Street Design Manual.

City of Kalamazoo

The City of Kalamazoo is the public municipality that owns the right-of-way throughout the city. A number of city units are referenced in this document that have a relationship to the street.

- **Community Planning & Economic Development:** Kalamazoo’s Community Planning & Economic Development Department (often referred to as CPED) works to create a healthy, safe, and sustainable community of choice through leadership, education, partnerships, and stewardship of resources and assets. The department has several areas of focus including land use and planning, the investment of federal, state, and local grant funds into neighborhoods, rental housing and building inspections, historic preservation, economic development, and the enforcement of codes and ordinances. Important divisions and initiatives within CPED include:
 - » **Community Investment:** The Community Development division invests federal, state and local funds in programs and services that benefit neighborhoods, business development, and low-income households to address critical needs in our community. This division works closely with neighborhood associations, non-profit organizations, foundations, and others community groups to build strong and sustainable neighborhoods.
 - » **Planning:** Kalamazoo’s planning staff directs future growth and redevelopment in the city through land use planning and zoning to help create a better, more sustainable community. The work of the Planning division is guided by the strategic vision and master plan for the city, which is reflected and implemented through the zoning ordinance.
- **Public Works:** The Public Works Division is comprised of professional engineers and technicians who design, inspect, and maintain infrastructure components in the city. Staff focus on building and maintaining a safe, efficient, and long lasting infrastructure in Kalamazoo. The division is responsible for street improvements and maintenance, sidewalks, snow and ice removal, forestry and leaf pickup, traffic signs and signals, the snow-melt system, and right-of-way permitting.
- **City of Kalamazoo Downtown Partnership (KDP):** The Kalamazoo Downtown Partnership is a public board that develops and maintains downtown Kalamazoo. They oversee the Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA), which is the TIF district downtown. Their responsibilities include keeping roads and sidewalks in good shape, making public spaces beautiful, and helping downtown’s economy grow.
- **Kalamazoo Boards & Commissions:** A number of local boards and commissions have a bearing on Kalamazoo’s streets:
 - » **City Commission:** Overarching elected body within the city, responsible for providing leadership, policy direction, and managing city operations and finances. Plays a primary role in approving capital projects and budgets.
 - » **Historic District Commission:** Reviews and advises projects in historic districts and properties.
 - » **Planning Commission:** Advises and makes recommendations to the city council regarding continuance of the master plan, zoning, ordinances, and other applicable codes. The Planning Commission reviews and approves Capital Improvement Project (CIP) recommendations.

Non-City Organizations and Agencies

- **Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS):** Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Greater Kalamazoo Area. Plays a significant role in long-term transportation planning and policy across the Kalamazoo region.
- **Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA or “Metro”):** Operates transit bus service in Kalamazoo and surrounding municipalities.
- **Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT):** State transportation department with jurisdiction over certain streets within the city. Coordination with MDOT is also required for railroad crossings and safety.
- **Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE):** Reviews and issues permits for projects within the floodplain.

Partners and Resources

The City of Kalamazoo works with a variety of local organizations on its economic development initiatives, including:

- Small Business Development Center (SBTDC)
- Michigan Works! Employment Resource Center
- Universities and Colleges:
 - » Western Michigan University: Major research institution and significant property owner within the city.
 - » Kalamazoo College
 - » Kalamazoo Valley Community College





1.3 GOALS AND VALUES

ESTABLISHING SHARED VALUES

Designing streets, especially when pursuing complete street objectives, can be a particularly challenging undertaking. Everyone living, working, learning, visiting, or recreating in the city relies on public streets to access destinations. However, streets also have limited public right-of-way width, yet face an ever increasing demand to accommodate multiple modes of travel in a safe and comfortable manner for all users.

The street design process is ultimately a process that navigates tough choices and trade-offs. Most streets in the city are simply not wide enough to accommodate all modes of transportation at the highest level of service, while also being sensitive to the adjacent land use context. There is simply not enough room!

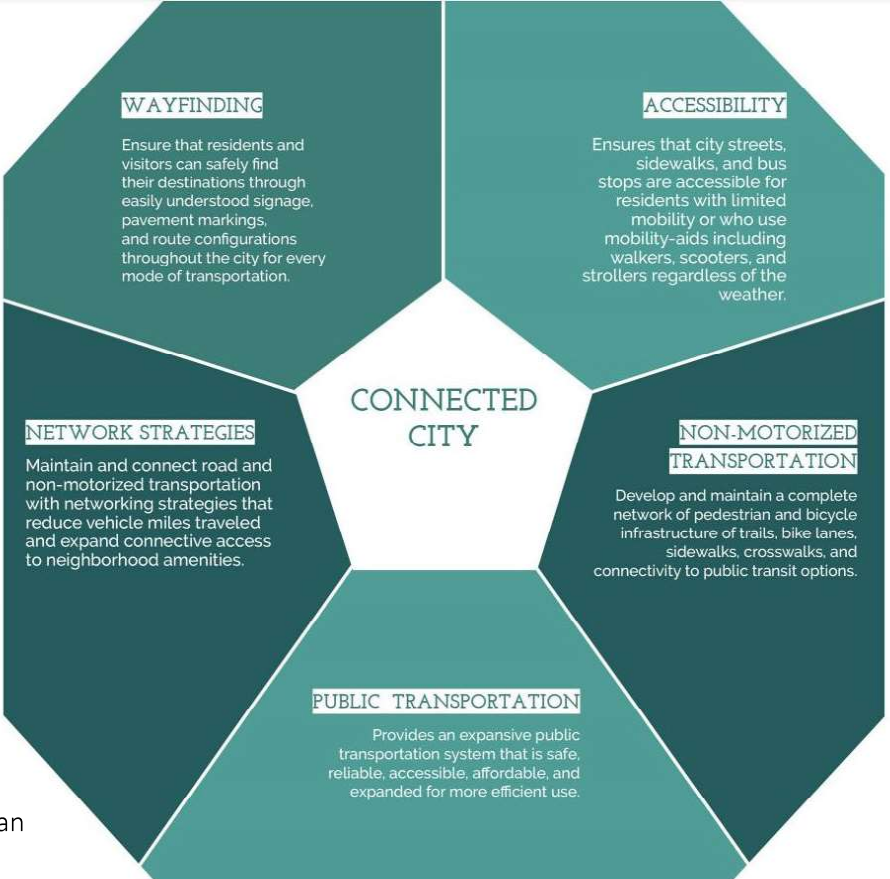
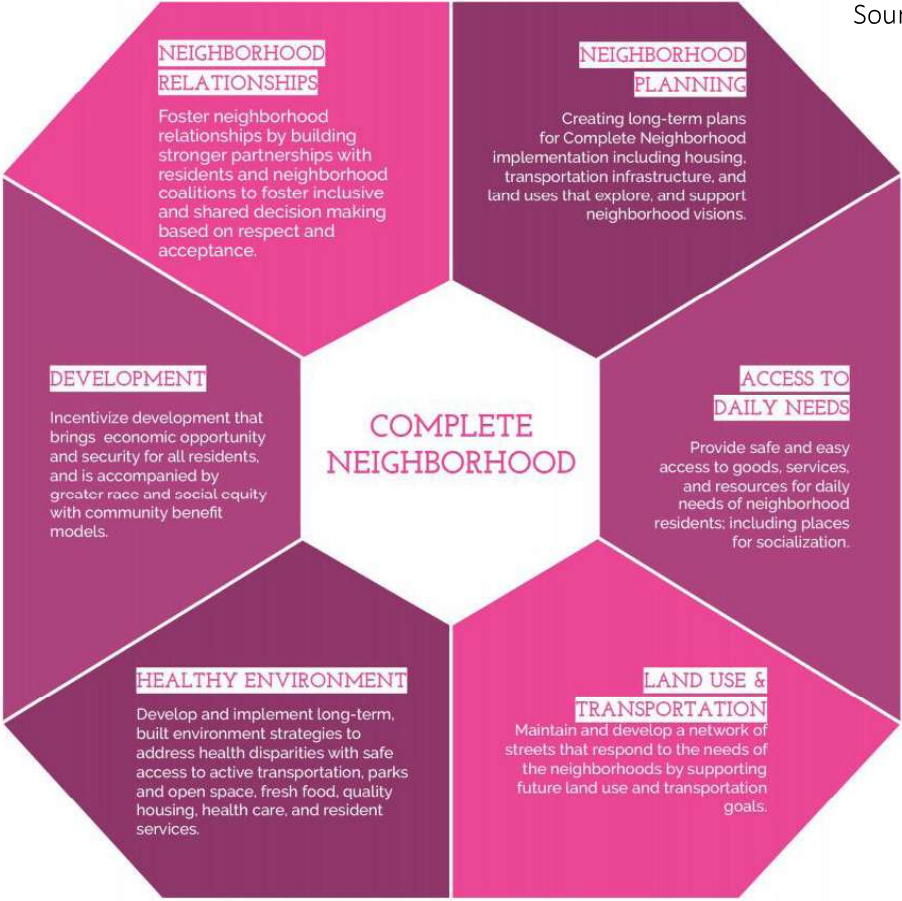
It is for this reason that utilizing shared community values, that are recognized by adopted city plans and policies, is vital for sound decision-making. When faced with tough design decisions, shared values can be used to assess which direction or choices are aligned with policy. Weaving a discussion of values into public engagement focused on transportation topics allows the community to understand the competing demands of streets and better see how certain design directions live up to their values, while other choices may not.

The 2025 Master Plan identified two key topics and value sets that relate directly to the design of public streets: the **connected city** and the **complete neighborhood**. Core tenets of these topics relate to how the City of Kalamazoo can more equitably, safely and comfortably connect people to schools, businesses, and opportunities. This in turn helps support stronger neighborhoods where people are better able to access daily needs and live in a healthy, safe, and supportive environment.

The street design values presented in this chapter build on these shared values and reinterpret them specifically in regards to street design and how this manual can provide tools for implementing projects in alignment with the city's values.

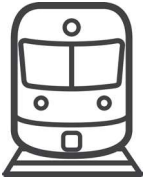


Source: Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 Master Plan



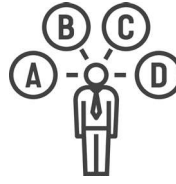
Source: Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 Master Plan

STREET DESIGN VALUES



CONNECTED CITY

- Strong connections between a diverse range of people and places
- A city networked for walking, biking, riding, and driving
- A reliable, accessible, and affordable public Transportation system



EQUITY & OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

- Street design informed by a neighborhood shared decision-making process
- Streets capable of being used by people of all ages and mobility levels
- Multi-modal networks that are equitably accessible to all neighborhoods



ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE & SUSTAINABLE

- A mobility network that is sustainable and resilient, and reduces vehicle miles traveled
- Street trees and landscaping provide ecological services as well as buffers and beautification
- Reduced stormwater runoff and urban heat island



SAFE COMMUNITY

- Streets are easy to understand and navigate
- All users can use streets safely and comfortably
- Streets prioritize the safety of vulnerable users above vehicle level of service



COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS

- Connective access to neighborhood amenities
- Neighborhood commercial nodes are walkable and accessible by all modes
- Neighborhood streets are safe and walkable



VIBRANT PLACES

- Strong connections between a diverse range of people and places
- A city networked for walking, biking, riding and driving
- Reliable, accessible, and affordable public Transportation system



RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE & GOOD GOVERNANCE

- Use an integrated design approach and coordinate with utilities
- Leverage government grants, private funding and foundation support to maximize and coordinate street and mobility improvements
- Ensure that private development and institution lead initiatives that support the city's goals for vibrant streets that are walkable and multi-modal

STREET DESIGN GOALS

The street design goals listed below build on and re-focus established city-wide goals in terms of public streets. These goals should be reviewed and returned to as transportation projects are identified, designed, and implemented, to ensure that projects are aligned with city values.

1. Design streets and provide mobility options that will change how people move through the city; prioritizing pedestrians, creating safe bicycle networks, and better access to transit to drive a shift in mode share for a more resilient, safe, and affordable city.
2. Put equity considerations front and center in the identification, design, and implementation of transportation projects to ensure that investments and improvements are grounded in and support individual communities.
3. Engineer streets for reliable, slow but steady traffic movement that prioritizes pedestrian and bicycle safety and multi-modal connectivity while minimizing traffic congestion.
4. Create a comfortable and safe pedestrian environment, regardless of the street type and designation.
5. Maintain and connect road and non-motorized transportation with networking strategies that reduce vehicle miles traveled and expand connective access to neighborhood amenities.
6. Support an expansive public transportation system that is safe, reliable, accessible, affordable, and expanded for more efficient use.
7. Develop and maintain a complete network of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure of trails, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, and connectivity to public transit options.
8. Ensure that city streets, sidewalks, and bus stops are accessible for residents with limited mobility or who use mobility-aids including walkers, scooters, and strollers regardless of the weather.
9. Maintain and develop a network of streets that responds to the needs of the neighborhoods by supporting future land use and transportation goals.
10. Engage communities in the design of streets and provide equitable access to amenities, transportation choices, and multi-modal networks.
11. Ensure that investments in the city's public right-of-way maximize return on investment measured across the design manual values, and that they can articulate and document their impact.
12. Implement street designs that respect and support adjacent land uses, strengthening the safety and character of neighborhoods and business areas.
13. Ensure that residents and visitors can safely find their destinations through easily understood signage, pavement markings, and route configurations throughout the city for every mode of transportation.



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