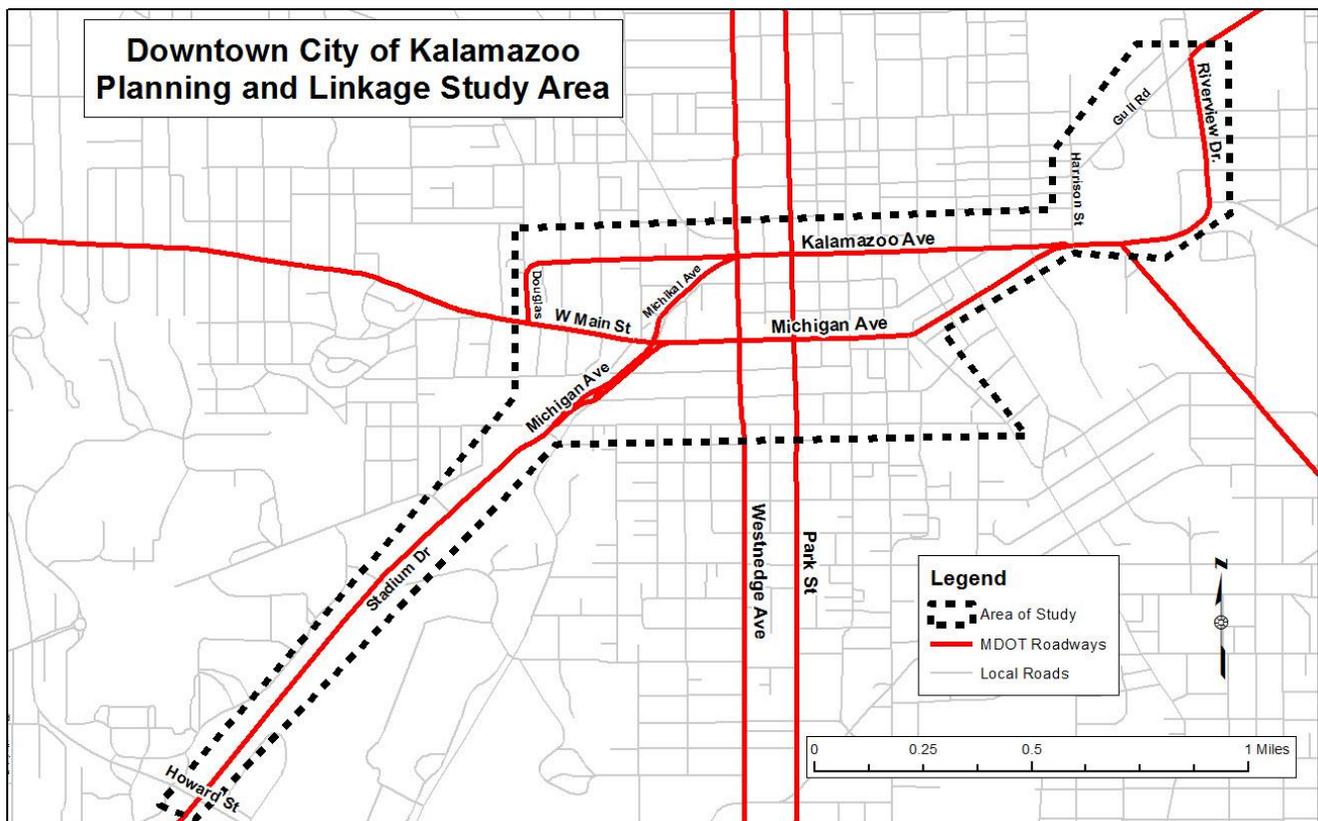


Draft Purpose and Need

October 20, 2016 PEL Public Meeting #2

The purpose of the Downtown Kalamazoo Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) is to improve **safety** and **operations** for all legal users of various transportation modes and pedestrians on Stadium Drive, Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo Avenue, and Michikal Street (I-94 BL / US-131 BR / M-43) and to provide a quality integrated transportation network for economic benefit and quality of life.

This PEL process includes this Study Area: Stadium Dr. (between Howard St. and Michigan Ave.), Michigan Ave. (between Stadium Dr. and Kalamazoo Ave.), Kalamazoo Ave. (between Douglas and Harrison St.), Michikal St. (between Michigan Ave. and Kalamazoo Ave.), Riverview Dr. (between Harrison St. and Gull Rd.), and Douglas (between W. Main St. and Kalamazoo Ave.) and will address the following needs:



Why? What are the problems or deficiencies with the existing situation? What facts support the need?

- Improve the safety of the corridors within the study area. *There are crashes of all types on these corridors within the study area which need to be analyzed and addressed to achieve a reduction in the crash rate.*
- Improve operations and connectivity for all users, all modes of the study area corridors by implementing context sensitive solutions. *Based on public comments it appears some connections are missing or less than desirable. By using context sensitive solutions the top priorities can be identified and addressed through the PEL process. A variety of tools will be used to examine and compare strategies.*
- Update/optimize operations at intersections to provide balanced operations for all modes. *The public meeting identified intersections that are particularly problematic for various modes. Along with MDOT and city data this information will help prioritize where review, analysis and strategies are needed to be identified through the PEL process.*

Why here? Why is this problem or deficiency occurring here and why? Is it important? Why are we addressing it only here? Where does “here” end and why?

The current downtown area traffic patterns have evolved through years of land-use decisions and various transportation changes. Other areas of the city have transportation challenges but here in the city center, this unique combination of concerns requires a coordinated vision for the future as land use changes/decisions are occurring rapidly. This study focuses primarily on the east/west corridors as well as the north/south route intersections within this segment. See study limits above.

- Create a plan to focus future MDOT and local agency projects within the study area corridors that improve operations and safety for all users (drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, transit users and commercial traffic). Review development proposals and permits for consistency with the adopted PEL recommendations.
- Identify and recognize historic features and natural resources in order to avoid and minimize impacts from proposed PEL strategies.
- Maintain economic viability in the study area.
- Coordinate with publicly adopted community plans within the context of downtown Kalamazoo, neighborhoods and campus areas.

Why now? What is the urgency? Why not wait until later? What could happen if not addressed now? What will happen if the situation is allowed to continue?

- Optimize the existing transportation infrastructure to coordinate with adopted community and neighborhood plans. Review proposed plans and developments with the PEL recommendations for consistency.

While there are not any projects or funds programmed on these corridors there are many planning initiatives underway by the city, WMU, developers, and others. If these agencies with jurisdiction create a plan for great roads and balanced networks they can review and approve those actions that fit the plan now and in the future. If the current practice of individual development proposals and approvals continue in a vacuum without a coordinated vision these corridors will continue to experience incompatible land use decisions that further complicate the operations and safety for the users of these corridors.

How will we know when we are successful?

How do we measure success in fulfilling the need for action?

Success will result in complete roadway networks with balanced operations for all users. Complete street concepts will be considered where possible. All agencies with jurisdiction will implement the PEL recommendations in their review and approvals of decisions affecting the traffic operations (flow, safety and efficiency) of the corridors within the study area. A reduction in crash rates on PEL corridors following the implementation of the PEL recommendations over time will be an additional measure of success.