



City Council Work Session
July 16, 2013

Item IV. JOINT SESSION WITH EDINA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

A. Living Streets

Attachments:

1. Living Streets Policy
2. Resolution No. 2011-61 Declaring Support for Establishing a Living Streets Policy
3. Boards and Commission Comments

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

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Living Streets Policy

Introduction

Living streets balance the needs of motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and transit riders in ways that promote safety and convenience, enhance community identity, create economic vitality, improve environmental sustainability, and provide meaningful opportunities for active living and better health. The Living Streets Policy defines Edina's vision for Living Streets and the principles and plans that will guide implementation.

The Living Street Policy ties directly to key community goals outlined in the City's 2008 Comprehensive Plan. Those goals include safe walking, bicycling and driving, reduced storm water runoff, reduced energy consumption, and promoting health. The Living Streets Policy also compliments voluntary City initiatives such the "do.town" effort related to community health, and the Tree City USA and the Green Step Cities programs related to sustainability. In other cases, the Living Street Policy will assist the City in meeting mandatory requirements set by other agencies. For example, the Living Streets Policy will support the City's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan which addresses mandates established under the Clean Water Act.

The Living Streets Policy provides the framework for a Living Streets Plan. The Living Streets Plan will address how the Policy will be implemented by providing more detailed information on street design, traffic calming, bike facilities, landscaping and lighting, as well as best practices for community engagement during the design process. Lastly, existing and future supporting plans such as the Bicycle Plan, Active Routes to Schools, Sidewalk Priority Plan and the Capital Improvement Plan will help to identify which projects are priorities with respect to this Policy.

Living Streets Vision

Edina is a place where...

- Transportation utilizing all modes is equally safe and accessible;
- Residents and families regularly choose to walk or bike;
- Streets enhance neighborhood character and community identity;
- Streets are inviting places that encourage human interaction and physical activity;
- Public policy strives to promote sustainability through balanced infrastructure investments;
- Environmental stewardship and reduced energy consumption are pursued in public and private sectors alike; and
- Streets support vibrant commerce and add to the value of adjacent land uses.

Living Streets Principles

The following principles will guide implementation of the Living Streets Policy. The City will incorporate these principles when planning for and designing the local transportation network and when making public and private land use decisions.

All Users and All Modes

The City will plan, design, and build high quality transportation facilities that meet the needs of the most vulnerable users (pedestrians, cyclists, children, elderly, and disabled) while enhancing safety and convenience for all users, and providing access and mobility for all modes.

Connectivity

- The City will design, operate, and maintain a transportation system that provides a highly connected network of streets that accommodate all modes of travel.
- The City will seek opportunities to overcome barriers to active transportation. This includes preserving and repurposing existing rights-of-way, and adding new rights-of-way to enhance connectivity for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit.
- The City will prioritize non-motorized improvements to key destinations such as public facilities, public transit, the regional transportation network and commercial areas.
- The City will require new developments to provide interconnected street and sidewalk networks that connect to existing or planned streets or sidewalks on the perimeter of the development.
- Projects will include consideration of the logical termini by mode. For example, the logical termini for a bike lane or sidewalk may extend beyond the traditional limits of a street construction or reconstruction project, in order to ensure multimodal connectivity and continuity.

Application

- The City will apply this Living Streets Policy to all street projects including those involving operations, maintenance, new construction, reconstruction, retrofits, repaving, rehabilitation, or changes in the allocation of pavement space on an existing roadway. This also includes privately built roads, sidewalks, paths and trails.
- The City will act as an advocate for Living Street principles when a local transportation or land use decision is under the jurisdiction of another agency.
- Living Streets may be achieved through single projects or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time.
- The City will draw on all sources of transportation funding to implement this Policy and actively pursue grants, cost sharing opportunities and other new or special funding sources as applicable.
- All City departments will support the vision and principles outlined in the Policy in their work.

Exceptions

Living Streets principles will be included in all street construction, reconstruction, repaving, and rehabilitation projects, except under one or more of the conditions listed below. City staff will document proposed exceptions as part of the project proposal.

Exceptions:

- A project involves only ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition, such as mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair, concrete joint repair, or pothole filling, or when interim measures are implemented on a temporary detour. Such maintenance activities, however, shall consider and meet the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians.
- The City exempts a project due to an excessively disproportionate cost of establishing a bikeway, walkway, or transit enhancement as part of a project.
- The City determines that the construction is not practically feasible or cost effective because of significant or adverse environmental impacts to waterways, flood plains, remnants or native vegetation, wetlands, or other critical areas.

Design

The City will develop and adopt guidelines as part of the Living Streets Plan to direct the planning, funding, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of new and modified streets, sidewalks, paths and trails. The guidelines will allow for context-sensitive designs.

The City's design guidelines will:

- Keep street pavement widths to the minimum necessary.
- Provide well-designed pedestrian accommodation in the form of sidewalks or shared-use pathways on all arterial and collector streets and on local connector streets as determined by context. Sidewalks shall also be required where streets abut a public school, public building, community playfield or neighborhood park. Termini will be determined by context.
- Provide frequent, convenient and safe street crossings. These may be at intersections designed to be pedestrian friendly, or at mid-block locations where needed and appropriate.
- Provide bicycle accommodation on all primary bike routes.
- Allocate right-of-way for boulevards.
- Allocate right-of-way for parking only when necessary and not in conflict with Living Streets principles.
- Consider streets as part of our natural ecosystem and incorporate landscaping, trees, rain gardens and other features to improve air and water quality.

The design guidelines in the Living Streets Plan will be incorporated into other City plans, manuals, rules, regulations, and programs as appropriate. As new and better practices evolve, the City will update the Living Streets Plan.

Context Sensitivity

Although many streets look more or less the same, every street is a unique combination of its neighborhood, adjacent land uses, natural features, street design, users, and modes. To accommodate these differences, the City will:

- Seek input from stakeholders;
- Design streets with a strong sense of place;
- Be mindful of preserving and protecting natural features, such as waterways, trees, slopes, and ravines;
- Be mindful of existing land uses and neighborhood character; and

- Coordinate with business and property owners along commercial corridors to develop vibrant commercial districts.

Benchmarks and Performance Measures

The City will monitor and measure its performance relative to this Policy. Benchmarks demonstrating success include:

- Every street and neighborhood is a comfortable place for walking and bicycling;
- Every child can walk or bike to school or a park safely;
- Seniors, children, and disabled people can cross all streets safely and comfortably;
- An active way of life is available to all;
- There are zero traffic fatalities or serious injuries;
- No unfiltered street water flows into local waterways; storm water volume is reduced; and
- Retail streets stay or become popular regional destinations.

The City will draw on the following data to measure performance. Additional performance measures may be identified as this Policy is implemented.

- Number of crashes or transportation-related injuries reported to the Police Department.
- Number and type of traffic safety complaints or requests.
- Resident responses to transportation related questions in resident surveys.
- Resident responses to post-project surveys.
- The number of trips by walking, bicycling and transit (if applicable) as measured before and after the project.
- Envision ratings from the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure.
- Speed statistics of vehicles on local streets.

Implementation

The goal of this Policy is to define and guide the implementation of Living Streets principles. Several steps still need to be taken to reach this goal. The first step will be to develop a Living Streets Plan to guide the implementation of the Policy. The Plan will:

- Identify and implement standards or guidelines for street and intersection design, universal pedestrian access, transit accommodations, and pedestrian crossings;
- Identify and implement standards or guidelines for streetscape ecosystems, including street water management, urban forestry, street furniture, and utilities;
- Identify regulatory demands and their relationship to this Policy (ADA/PROWAG, MPCA, MNMUTCD, MnDOT state aid, watershed districts);
- Define the process by which residents participate in street design and request Living Streets improvements; and
- Define standards for bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to ensure access to key public, private and regional destinations.

Additional implementation steps include:

- Communicate this Policy to residents and other stakeholders; educate and engage on an ongoing basis;
- Update City ordinances, engineering standards, policies and guidelines to agree with this Policy;
- Inventory building and zoning codes to bring these into agreement with Living Streets principles as established by this Policy;
- Update and document maintenance policies and practices to support Policy goals;
- Update and document enforcement policies and practices to ensure safe streets for all modes;
- Incorporate Living Streets concepts in the next circulation of the City's general plans (Comprehensive Plan, Bicycle Plan, Active Routes to School Plan, etc.);
- Incorporate Living Streets as a criteria when evaluating transportation priorities in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP);
- Review and update funding policies to ensure funding sources for Living Streets projects; and
- Coordinate with partner jurisdictions to achieve goals in this Policy.



**RESOLUTION NO. 2011-61
DECLARING SUPPORT FOR
ESTABLISHING A LIVING STREETS POLICY**

City of Edina

WHEREAS, the Living Streets concept is designed to assure safety and accessibility for all users of our roads, trails and transit systems, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, commercial and emergency vehicles, and for people of all ages and of all abilities; and

WHEREAS, Living Streets reduce congestion by providing safe travel choices that encourage non-motorized transportation options, increasing the overall capacity of the transportation network; and

WHEREAS, Living Streets will help the City of Edina reduce greenhouse gas emissions as more people choose an alternative to the single occupant vehicle; and Living Streets is consistent with the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and the City's participation in the Green Steps Cities program; and

WHEREAS, Living Streets support economic growth and community stability by providing accessible and efficient connections between home, school, work, recreation and retail destinations by improving the pedestrian and vehicular environments throughout communities; and

WHEREAS, Living Streets enhance safe walking and bicycling options for school age children, in recognition of the objectives of the national Safe Routes to School program; and

WHEREAS, Living Streets provide environmental and social benefits including but not limited to:

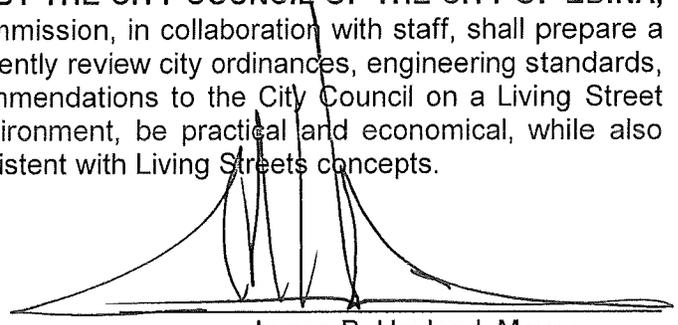
- 1) Improving storm water quality
- 2) Providing traffic calming measures
- 3) Enhancing community feel
- 4) Promoting active living
- 5) Improving biking and walking conditions
- 6) Protecting and enhancing the urban forest; and

WHEREAS, in order to develop and maintain a safe, efficient, balanced and environmentally sound city transportation system for people of all ages and abilities, transportation and development projects shall incorporate a philosophy that expands transportation choices and further incorporates the Living Streets theme and key concepts listed above; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA that the Edina Transportation Commission, in collaboration with staff, shall prepare a Living Streets Policy/Plan and staff shall concurrently review city ordinances, engineering standards, policies, and guidelines in order to make recommendations to the City Council on a Living Street Policy/Plan that will reduce impacts to the environment, be practical and economical, while also meeting community and stakeholder needs consistent with Living Streets concepts.

Dated: May 17, 2011

Attest: 
Debra A. Manger, City Clerk


James B. Hovland, Mayor

STATE OF MINNESOTA)
COUNTY OF HENNEPIN) SS
CITY OF EDINA)

CERTIFICATE OF CITY CLERK

I, the undersigned duly appointed and acting City Clerk for the City of Edina do hereby certify that the attached and foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by the Edina City Council at its Regular Meeting of May 17, 2011, and as recorded in the Minutes of said Regular Meeting.

WITNESS my hand and seal of said City this 17th day of May, 2011.

Debra A. Marquardt
City Clerk

Living Streets Notes from Boards and Commissions

ETC

Share policy with Watershed District

Courtney would volunteer to serve on the advisory committee

Is there a way to benchmark other communities (performance measures)?

Do we need more with respect to the green element in the policy?

Measure impervious surface before and after projects?

The slide from Barr that shows roads pre-industrialization would be good?

Have scripted PowerPoint for Living Streets on website

HRRC

What is the ADA requirement for upgrading our street crossing (timeframe)?

Need to do more driver education especially with respect to bike lanes

Do people know how to report a street safety issue? Is it possible the complaints are underreported because they are received by the PD?

Watch height of landscaping on roundabouts – can hide bicyclists

Should bicyclists be discouraged from riding in the winter? Makes it less safe for everyone

Are our streets an opportunity for place making?

Should road signs be in other languages in addition to English?

Park Board

Does City have arterials and collectors defined?

Will City revisit neighborhoods where sidewalks were rejected during street reconstruction due to cost?

PD has a major role in traffic calming.

Are there good examples in western suburbs that we can follow or think about?

Under second bullet in benchmarks, add “parks”

EEC:

Support for the policy and interest in participating in further policy or plan development (such as rain gardens).

Concern about pavement materials, maintenance standards--belief that there are more environmentally friendly, cost efficient and long lasting pavement materials.

Concern policy has good goals, but skepticism that it will be implemented unless standards are put into code and there is enforcement.

Liked focus on non-motorized transportation--reducing driving is a way to reduce CO2 emissions.

Like that the policy pulls together environment, transportation, economic benefits, health--keep it that way.

Water quality working group would be interested working on the storm water parts of the policy

Planning Commission:

What are the challenges or barriers to getting this policy approved?

Are we incorporating Living Streets principles into the Byerly's project?

Will this be able to be incorporated into the City Code?

Challenge that we have is this policy covers the right-of-way; how do we get developers or owners to connect the buildings to the streets?

How do we dove-tail the two commissions to implement the policy?

Can this be incorporated in the next Comprehensive Plan update?

How are the principles applied to France Ave project?

Be sure that maintenance of these facilities is stated in the policy.

How do we measure what we have done?

Status of the plan.

How is the public education addressed?

How is the storm water management address from both quality and flood plain point of view?

Michael Platteter and Claudia Carr volunteered to serve on the Advisory Group