



6100 Southport Road
Portage, Indiana 46368
(219) 763-6060
www.nirpc.org

RESOLUTION 20-17

A RESOLUTION IMPLEMENTING LIVING STREETS GUIDELINES FOR NIRPC-PROGRAMMED TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

July 16, 2020

WHEREAS, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) promotes an equitable and effective multimodal, regional land use/transportation system that is safe, as well as energy, environmentally and fiscally efficient, maximizes regional connectivity, serves the mobility needs of all citizens, utilizes stormwater runoff mitigation best practices, improves the health of the general public, and is environmentally sensitive; and

WHEREAS, NIRPC promotes sustainable transportation that encourages walking, rolling, bicycling and transit use while promoting safe operations for all users, while improving the natural and built environment via the integration of more energy efficient and ecologically friendly management practices, as increased walking, rolling and cycling offers the potential for better air quality, reduces motor traffic, curbs fossil fuel reliance, fosters a more efficient right-of-way, promotes greater health of the local population and manages stormwater runoff while allowing for the implementation of permeable surfaces, referred to commonly as “Green Streets” concepts; and

WHEREAS, "Complete Streets" are roadways that accommodate safe, efficient and equitable access for all users by law including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets are achieved when transportation agencies routinely plan, design, construct, re-construct, operate, and maintain the transportation network to improve travel conditions for all users of the roadway, and adopt methods that increase the longevity, accessibility, and efficiency of the roadway in a manner consistent with, and supportive of, the surrounding community; and

WHEREAS, increasing active and sustainable transportation (e.g., walking, rolling, bicycling, using public transportation and low-emission vehicles) offers the potential for improved public health, economic development, a cleaner environment, reduced transportation costs, enhanced community connections, social equity, and more livable communities; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets principles have been, and continue to be, adopted nationwide at state, regional, and municipal levels in the interest of adherence to federal regulations that promote multimodal transportation options and accessibility for all users, including NIRPC's 2010 *Complete Streets Policy & Guidelines*; and

WHEREAS, "Green Streets" represent a stormwater management approach that incorporates vegetation (perennials, shrubs, trees), soil, and engineered systems to slow, filter, and cleanse stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces (e.g., streets, sidewalks); and

WHEREAS, NIRPC seeks to combine both Complete and Green Streets principles into a unified policy called "Living Streets;" and

WHEREAS, Living Streets provide for the development of pedestrian, rolling, bicycle, transit and electric vehicle charging infrastructure, green stormwater infrastructure, and ecological revitalization which offers long term cost savings, public health improvements, pollution reduction, water quality and habitat improvement, increases green space while reducing fossil fuel demands, and creates safe opportunities for convenient active transportation; and

WHEREAS, Living Streets improvements follow Universal Design principles that include, but are not limited to, marked bicycle lanes on the roadway, paved shoulders, signed bike routes, safe access to bus stops, shared use paths, sidewalks, bicycle parking facilities, marked or raised street crossings (including over- and under passes), pedestrian signals, signs and auditory cues, multi-purpose spaces, vegetated swales, green gutters, rain gardens, stormwater curb extensions, pervious paving, stormwater planters, increased green space, and urban street trees; and

WHEREAS, providing access for people with disabilities is a civil rights mandate that is not subject to limitation by project costs, levels of use, or "exceptional circumstances" where the Americans with Disabilities Act requires pedestrian facilities that, when newly constructed or altered, be accessible; and

WHEREAS, NIRPC is responsible for planning and programming transportation projects that utilize federal grants which adhere to goals and objectives from previously adopted documents such as the *NWI 2050 Plan*, *Creating Livable Communities*, *Greenways+Blueways 2020 Plan*, the *Marquette Action Plan*, and other applicable documents; and

WHEREAS, it is NIRPC's vision to undertake bold planning initiatives that positively impact Northwestern Indiana's future to create a strong, accessible, safe, sustainable, climate-resilient, clean and high-quality environment in which to live, work and play.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that NIRPC supports the concept of Living Streets and hereby establish the attached Guidelines to incorporate Living Streets facilities to the most practicable extent as proposed by the project sponsor in all transportation projects using NIRPC-attributable federal funds;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Living Streets Guidelines are hereby established wherein project sponsors need to provide in the written request for federal funding documentation providing for the inclusion of Living Streets facilities in the proposed project seeking NIRPC-attributable funds and application materials must include a description of the facilities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that sponsors using other local, state, or non-NIRPC attributable federal funds be encouraged to accommodate practicable Living Streets facilities, in the planning and design of all proposed transportation projects;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NIRPC-based stakeholder committees responsible for various funding priorities utilize these Living Street Guidelines and review proposed project descriptions to account for Living Streets adherence and providing exemptions to projects where deemed appropriate.

Duly adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission on this sixteenth day of July, 2020.



Michael Griffin
Chairperson

ATTEST:



Justin Kiel
Secretary

NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Living Streets Planning & Design Guidelines

Below are planning and design guidelines to assist project sponsors in the accommodation of all users (bicyclists, pedestrians, transit users, motorists and people with disabilities, hereafter referred to as “Living Streets” facilities). Project sponsors shall use these guidelines in planning for and designing their projects. The Guidelines will be used by NIRPC staff and relevant committees as the proposed project is processed through current project selection and planning review.

1. Living Streets facilities shall be established on rehabilitation, restoration, and resurfacing (3R), partial 3R, and new construction and reconstruction (4R) projects unless one or more of the following conditions are met (entities will be required to provide evidence for justification of exemption(s)):

a. Where non-motorized users are prohibited by law from using the roadway.

In this instance, the applicant should accommodate Living Streets facilities as practicable within the right of way or within the same transportation corridor. Such projects shall still be inclined to incorporate green infrastructure improvements referenced in the above document.

b. The cost of establishing Living Streets facilities that meet applicable standards would exceed 15% of the cost of the larger transportation project. Eligible costs may include additional right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, utility replacement by way of natural infrastructure, vegetative additions, and other construction costs with the establishment of said facilities.

c. Where the project consists of minor maintenance or repair (reconstruction is not included). Minor projects include, but are not limited to, emergency and periodic/preventative maintenance.

d. Where the project consists primarily of the installation of traffic control or safety devices and little or no additional right-of-way is to be acquired.

e. There are topographic or natural resource constraints.

f. Where factors indicate an absence of need.

g. Where existing Living Streets facilities currently exists or are scheduled for construction within or near the corridor.

2. On proposed 3R and 4R projects that do not increase vehicular capacity, Living Streets facilities shall be incorporated where applicable and as proposed by the project sponsor including in the following ways:

- a. Resurfacing including striping for additional shoulder width and/or crosswalks, as well as bike lanes where feasible in urban settings.
- b. Signalization including installation of pedestrian activated signals, and/or review of proper operation and timing of pedestrian phases.
- c. Restriping sufficiently wide pavements and bridge decks for additional shoulder width in accordance with applicable federal guidelines.
- d. Bridge deck replacement with extension of bridge deck (or other means) to accommodate all users.
- e. In cases where an adopted regional or local plan proposes a bikeway, rolling or pedestrian way that would pass under or over a bridge that is to be reconstructed, the bridge shall be reconstructed to accommodate intended users.
- f. Intersection upgrades including crosswalks and pedestrian actuated signals.
- g. In rural areas, paved shoulders should be included in all new construction and reconstruction projects on roadways used by more than 1,000 vehicles per day (ADT). Shoulders with a minimum of five-foot paved asphalt width preferred, accompanied by bicycle-friendly rumble strips. Paved shoulders have safety and operational advantages for all road users in addition to providing a place for bicyclists and pedestrians to operate.
- h. Right-of-way flooding.
- i. In places where additional vegetation can lead to improved pollinator habitat, heating/cooling cost savings, and increased public health.

3. The design and development of the transportation infrastructure shall improve conditions for all users by:

- a. Planning projects for the long-term. The design and construction of new transportation facilities should presume demand for all users, aim to improve health and increase ecological resilience, and not preclude the provision of future improvements. In particular, where development is projected to change the character of an area from rural

to suburban to urban over the long-term, it is encouraged that adequate right-of-way and infrastructure be established as part of a near-term project to accommodate future facilities where applicable. Every project should be planned and designed with the ultimate, long-term goal of creating, over time, Living Streets facilities.

b. Connecting Living Streets facilities across jurisdictional boundaries. As the metropolitan planning organization, NIRPC has a vantage point from which to recommend to the jurisdictions the connection and continuity of facilities for all users for the purpose of qualifying for federal funding. One way which NIRPC does this is through the *Comprehensive Regional Plan* which is updated every five years.

c. Designing context-appropriate facilities to the best currently available standards and guidelines. The design of said facilities shall be in accordance with applicable federal guidelines.

d. Addressing the need for bicyclists, rollers and pedestrians to cross corridors as well as travel along them. Even where bicyclists, rollers and pedestrians may not commonly travel along a corridor that is being improved or constructed, they will likely need to be able to cross that corridor safely and conveniently. For instance, a roadway project that does not contain a bike facility (interstate highway) should address bridge crossings that are hostile for bicycles, rollers and pedestrians. Therefore, the design of intersections and interchanges shall accommodate cyclists, rollers and pedestrians in a manner that is safe, accessible and convenient.

e. Creating a more connected, renewed, united and vibrant Northwest Indiana. Living Streets projects support NIRPC's planning initiatives including those that address climate change and its potential impacts.