

Open house set for the Main Street project

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by Peter Bodley

Managing editor

A public information meeting on the Main Street reconstruction project from Thrush to Crane streets in Coon Rapids has been set for Wednesday, Dec. 9.

The public is invited to attend the open house, co-hosted by the Anoka County Highway Department and the city of Coon Rapids, 5 to 6:30 p.m., in Community Room A at the Coon Rapids City Center, 11155 Robinson Drive.

The meeting will provide an opportunity for the public to discuss the project with representatives from Anoka County, the city of Coon Rapids and project consultant Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc.

Citizens with questions regarding the project and unable to attend the meeting or those in need of accommodation because of disability should contact Jack Corkle, Anoka County Highway Department project manager, at 763-862-4219 or e-mail jack.corkle@co.anoka.mn.us or Curt Kobilarcsik, engineering program manager, at 763-862-4223 or e-mail curt.kobilarcsik@co.anoka.mn.us.

The reconstruction includes two through lanes in each direction (it is now a two-lane roadway), concrete medians, turn lanes, a bike trail, sidewalk and a new traffic signal at Shenandoah Boulevard.

The new signal will come with protected left- and right-turn lanes and turn arrows.

The Hanson Boulevard signal on this stretch of Main Street was reconstructed as part of the Hanson upgrade from just south of Main Street to north of Bunker Lake Boulevard, which was completed last year.

Project work will start at Thrush Street, where the current four-lane alignment on Main Street ends, just east of Coon Creek Boulevard, with the new four-lane configuration ending at the Crane Street intersection, which is immediately east of Hanson, a 1.1-mile stretch.

There will also be a 600- to 800-foot segment constructed east of Crane to just west of Avocet Street to taper the road from the four lanes back to two lanes, according to Andrew Witter, county highway assistant engineer.

Poor soil conditions and a high water table in the area of the sod farms between Shenandoah and Hanson boulevards will necessitate the construction of a land bridge with steel tube pilings to hold up the road, Corkle said.

The peat in that area is up to 30 feet deep and will have to be excavated, filled and pilings driven before the bridge itself can be built, she said.

A land bridge to deal with similar poor soils on Main Street at the Coon Creek Bridge was constructed during reconstruction of the Main Street/Highway 10 interchange.

Noise walls are also proposed at four potential locations along the route.

- South side of Main Street between Thrush Street and Shenandoah Boulevard.
- South side of Main Street from the sod fields to almost Hanson Boulevard.
- North side of Main Street from Shenandoah Boulevard west to the end of the townhouse development.
- North side of Main Street from Hanson Boulevard east to Crane Street where the Real Life Senior Cooperative housing development is located.

Under the current timetable, final design for the project will be completed by February 2010 and right of way acquisition by March 2010.

Construction is anticipated to start in May 2010 with completion by November 2011.

The estimated project cost has been put at \$9.176 million. The county has received \$5.85 million in federal dollars to pay a portion of the cost.

The bulk of the balance will come from the state's turnback account, which became available to the county when it assumed jurisdiction of Main Street, formerly State Highway 242, from MnDOT in 2007.

There will be limited county financial participation in the project and the city of Coon Rapids will have some costs associated with the Shenandoah Boulevard signal replacement.

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