

# PLAN YOUR PARKS

## FEEDBACK FROM THE PUBLIC

COON CREEK REGIONAL TRAIL PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE



PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE CONCEPT PLAN



COON RAPIDS BLVD BEFORE & AFTER



PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE LOCATION

## ***Public Participation Themes:***

Input from public participation reaffirmed the issues that the pedestrian bridge will help to alleviate. Most of the input from the public could be categorized into two major themes; safety and access.

### **1. Safety:**

There were many concerns about the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians crossing Coon Rapids Blvd in the project area. These concerns fell into a few different categories:

#### **A. Coon Rapids Boulevard**

Vehicle Speed and enforcement is an issue in the project area as well as elsewhere along the road. The City/County should consider longer turn lanes, dedicated turn lanes, roundabouts, restricting vehicular access by reducing the number of intersections and using frontage roads; restrict pedestrian access to prevent jaywalking. There's a need for additional safe crossings for Coon Rapids Blvd further west/north.

#### **B. Sidewalks**

Residents have concerns about the clearing of snow from sidewalks and bus stops in this area during in the winter. The City will work in conjunction with Anoka County and Metro Transit to maintain accessibility to the best of their ability at these locations.

The City will maintain sidewalks in the City right-of-way. Sidewalk plowing will begin as soon as possible after a significant snowfall. As there are a limited number of personnel available, the City will only maintain sidewalks and pathways by moving snow with a snow blower or plow.

#### **C. Cross Walk Improvements**

Improve the existing crosswalks by programming additional time for pedestrians to cross; stopping all traffic (including right turn lanes) when crossing light is activated should be considered and making the crossing shorter by adding intersection bump-outs, etc.

#### **D. Lighting in the area**

Additional lighting for night use of the bridge and trail. A bright setting at night will allow people to feel more comfortable in using the bridge day or night.

#### **E. Other pedestrian bridge needs**

There were concerns about the pedestrian bridge location and many suggestions for other locations in the community that should have pedestrian bridges. Some of the other locations suggested are as follows:

- i. Northdale at Coon Rapids High School - there were many comments supporting this idea, along with better lighting in this area at night
- ii. Coon Rapids Boulevard at the Ice Arena and Anoka Ramsey Community College - this also has many comments supporting this location which also provides better access to Crooked Lake Library.
- iii. There were a few comments regarding the need for one to be added to the Hanson Blvd project.
- iv. There was a comment regarding the need for a pedestrian bridge over Highway 10 near the Coon Rapids Senior High School to connect north and south.

## 2. Access:

There were many public comments related to access at the project site and throughout the city.

### A. Sidewalks

There's a need for additional sidewalks in the project area as well as additional sidewalks to fill gaps throughout the city and provide better access for pedestrians. Besides the project area, other areas specifically mentioned were elsewhere along Coon Rapids Boulevard and along Northdale Boulevard from Hanson Boulevard to Foley Boulevard.

### B. Signage

Better wayfinding signage with maps are needed for trail users to orient themselves and find local and regional destinations in the area.

### C. Bike Lanes

There is a need for additional bike lanes throughout the city for better access and transportation opportunities.

### D. Bus Stops

There is a need to clear and maintain bus stops better during winter months and to provide shelter from inclement weather. This will provide a safe and dry location for people to wait for their bus. The City will work in conjunction with Anoka County and Metro Transit to maintain accessibility to the best of their ability at these locations.

### E. Flow of traffic

There should be consideration for the flow of traffic from both directions for accessing the bridge.

There were many comments providing general support for the project and several miscellaneous comments. One of which was a comment questioning who benefits and what purpose does the bridge serve. A few comments stated that the crosswalks at the intersections should be enough and a few others commented that the mature oak trees taken down for the housing redevelopment should be replaced.

While feedback received was overwhelmingly positive, a handful of negative comments were received, primarily via social media. There is no known organized opposition to the project. Negative comments are summarized below with City and County Staff comments.

### 1. Cost:

Several comments were received that are opposed to the project because of the estimated cost and that it's too much to spend with little benefit.

*The City plans to seek a variety of funding sources to pay for the pedestrian bridge. The City is actively seeking State Bonding funds and Federal Regional Solicitation funds. No impact to local taxes is expected as part of this project.*

2. Use:

There were a few comments opposed because of the limited use they believed the bridge would receive.

*The pedestrian bridge will be situated along the highly used Coon Creek regional trail corridor that connects the Coon Rapids Dam and Bunker Hills Regional Parks. This regional trail corridor is expected to see additional use with the installation of a pedestrian bridge at Coon Rapids Boulevard. The City is also planning to perform substantial upgrades soon to Al Flynn Park (a cornerstone City Park) which is located on the north side of Coon Rapids Boulevard at Avocet Street. This future park upgrade is expected to generate additional use from nearby area residents.*

3. Other needs:

Several commenters opposed because they believe other projects should occur in its place. Most of the other projects suggested related to filling potholes, fixing roads, taking better care of sidewalks during the winter months, addressing other issues/priorities first, or other pedestrian bridge locations.

*The City and Anoka County are actively working together on projects that will make repairs to Coon Rapids Boulevard in the year 2020 between 111<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Hanson Boulevard, as well as between Egret Boulevard and the Coon Rapids Boulevard/East River Road split. The City pursues an aggressive yearly street reconstruction program that includes the reconstruction of 5 to 8 miles of City streets each year. Numerous sidewalk segments are repaired as part of these reconstruction projects. The City has made recent investments in equipment upgrades for sidewalk and trail plowing equipment that will better allow for maintenance of these facilities during the winter months.*