

Trail Connections

Fall 2010

The Quarterly Newsletter Published by the Linn County Trails Association



President's Message:

This is my final opportunity to compose a note as your President. I have thought quite a bit about the type of message; the parting thought. Rather than look back and reflect I would prefer to look forward and share an opinion. I believe we are on the cusp of an explosion in the growth of our multimodal transportation system, locally and across the country. Notice I didn't say trails. I will leave the debate on the definition of trails for another time. But we are seeing momentum building for the inclusion of trails and related transportation options in the design of city, county and state infrastructure.

I have said it many times in the past, Linn County Trails does not build trails, the government does. We have seen that fact in action this past year. Linn County continues to build trails; Marion and Cedar Rapids build trails. Cedar Rapids has created a Comprehensive Trails Plan to act as a guide for the future. Significant progress is underway toward expansion of our trail system. That said, it is still a slow process, but we cannot be dissuaded. Our mission as an association is to be a catalyst for the development of trails.

The success of our organization, in my opinion, rests with carrying a message of support to the entities that actually build trails. Our message is clear and consistent, trails are important to the health of our communities and our citizenry. Our challenge lies in raising the volume of our voice when we shout our message. The only way we raise our volume is to increase the number of voices who support our mission. In this age of social networking we must seek opportunities to connect with more trail supporters. We are using our newsletter, Facebook and our new website to get our message to more people.

So, what is the charge to you? Find more supporters and have them commit their support to our mission. Visit our website and send the link to fellow supporters. Connect with others who believe trails are important. Only through your effort can we raise the volume of our voice.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve.

Happy Trails,



Geoff Eastburn

LCTA Officers

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Geoff Eastburn

Vice President

John Wauer

Treasurer

Keith Sutherland

Secretary

Brad Mullin

Past President

Jon Bogert

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(Iowa Trails Council)

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(Cedar Rapids City Council)



Upcoming Events

Save the Date!

Tuesday, December 7th

5:30-7:30pm

Linn County Trails Association Annual Reception

Benz Beverage Depot

501 7th Ave SE

The reception is free and open to the public. Wine and beer tasting, appetizers served. Informal update on trails progress. Share your ideas about trail development and how you use the trails.

LCTA Board Meeting

Monday, January 10th, 7:00pm

Location: TBD

Find out about recent updates on trail news and events, visit the Linn County Trails Association's website at

www.linncountytails.org



Join LCTA on facebook @
www.facebook.com/lctrails



Follow LCTA on Twitter @
www.twitter.com/lctrails

*Trail Connections is the quarterly publication of the
Linn County Trails Association.*

*It is published March, June, September, and December.
Articles may be submitted as an MS Word or text file.
Typed, printed or clearly handwritten articles are also
accepted. Photos can be prints or can be submitted
digitally and saved with a resolution of ideally 300 dpi
and a size of 6x8 inches. The deadline for each issue is
the first day of the month prior to publication. Please
send pictures, stories, and ideas to Brad Mullin:
mullinb1427@yahoo.com*

Current Metro Area Trails

Open for use Fall 2010

Trail	Miles	Surface	Remarks
Cedar River Trail (ADT)	11	Asphalt	Cedar Rapids+Hiawatha+County
CRT Lake Loop	1.3	Asphalt	Around Cedar Lake
Bowling Street Trail	1	Concrete	From 50th Street SW to Wilson Avenue
Prairie Park Trail	1.7	Asphalt	Prairie Park off Otis Rd. SE
Cherokee Park Trail	1	Crushed Limestone	West Side: Edgewood to Wiley Blvd.
Ellis Park Trail	3	Asphalt/Concrete	From Ellis Park to Downtown
Boyson Trail	3	Crushed Limestone	Follows Indian Creek, Marion
Kirkwood Connector Trail	1	Concrete	From Ely Rd. to Kirkwood Campus
Grant Wood Trail	5	Grass/Gravel	Through Eastern Linn County
Lowe Park Trail	0.5	Asphalt	Marion: N. 10th St to 35th Ave
Cherry Hill Trail	0.8	Crushed Limestone	NW Cedar Rapids: Cherry Hill Park
Noelridge Park Trail	0.8	Crushed Limestone	NE Cedar Rapids: Noelridge Park
Nixon Trail	0.75	Crushed Limestone	NE Cedar Rapids: Around Nixon School
Fay Clark Memorial Trail	0.7	Asphalt	Hiawatha: Fay Clark Memorial Park
Squaw Creek Trail	4	Natural-Groomed	Located within Squaw Creek Park
Matsell Bridge Natural Area	8.4	Natural-Groomed	NE Linn County, near Viola
Pinicon Ridge Park	12	Natural-Groomed	Five park trails near Central City
Beverly Park	5	Natural-Groomed	SW CR: Singletrack Mountain Bike trails
Fross Park	1.2	Crushed Limestone	Walking trail, NW Center Point
Wickiup Hill	5	Natural-Groomed	5 mile network near Toddville
Hoover Nature Trail	1.3	Asphalt	76th Ave. SW to Wright Bros. Blvd.

Prairie Park Fishery Opening :

The Prairie Park Fishery was dedicated on September 18, 2010. The 120 acre park features a new 1.7 hard mile surfaced trail. The park is open year round, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to dusk (one half hour after sunset). At exactly one half hour after sunset the gates will be locked. Any vehicles left inside the park will remain there until the following morning until the park reopens. The entrance to the park is located in Cedar Rapids off Otis Rd. S.E.



Photo courtesy of the City of Cedar Rapids





A section of the Ellis Trail from I Avenue NW to Penn Avenue NW is closed for a bank stabilization project from N Avenue NW to Penn Avenue NW. The trail was closed through October as stabilization work was completed along the levee. Trail users were asked to follow the marked detour around the construction area. The trail is now open to all users.

Under Construction: Ellis Trail



Under Construction: CEMAR Trail

Construction of the CEMAR trail has begun on the 1/6 mile second phase. The 12-foot-wide trail will sit in the middle of a 120 foot railroad right of way. A neighborhood meeting was held Friday, September 10th to answer questions raised by property owners adjacent to the new section. Many of the homeowners were supportive of the trail development but had concerns about drainage, maintenance and safety along the new trail. City officials made themselves available to answer questions and listen to concerns. Construction of Phase II should be completed in November



LCTA Cedar Valley Nature Trail

Campaign : Last Chance to Contribute!

The Linn County Trail Association's fund-raising campaign for the paving of the Cedar Valley Nature Trail is near its goal of \$96,250. Your contribution could help put our fundraising efforts over the top. The Linn County Conservation Board has contracted the construction of Phase II of the project with the third phase. When complete the new hard surfaced section will extend from County Home Road to Schultz Road in Linn County. Work on the trail is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2011 and completion, weather permitting, in the spring of 2012.



Yes, I would like to contribute to the paving of the Cedar Valley Nature Trail

Please accept my tax-deductible contribution of: \$ _____

If you would like to give \$20 or more, LCTA will send you the *Trails Connections* Newsletter for the next year. Check here ☐ if you would not like to receive the *Trails Connections* Newsletter.

Name (Please Print): _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

☐ I've enclosed the employer matching gift paperwork

Please send payments to: LCTA

(Make checks payable to LCTA) P.O. Box 2681

Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-2681

Under Construction: Hoover Nature Trail



A section located within the city limits

The construction of a 1.091 mile trail connecting the completed first phase of the Hoover Trail to Ely City Park began in August 2010. The \$392,510 project has been slowed by rain. The majority of the new trail uses the railroad right of way with a short section requiring trail users to travel closer to Ely Rd. The at-grade crossing of Ely Rd, near Wright Brothers Blvd, and rehabilitation of historic arch culvert are unique features of the newly created piece of trail.



An historic railroad arch way

Under Construction: CVNT Black Hawk County

Flood recovery of the Cedar Valley Nature Trail in Black Hawk County is a story of two bridges. In February 2009, the Federal Emergency Management Agency determined the Evansdale nature trail bridge was eligible for \$2.2 million in federal and state funding. The funds covered the design costs and right-of-way acquisition involved in replacing the 468-foot former railroad bridge. The new bridge will be elevated higher above the river. This required moving River Road and an electrical tower on the north end of the bridge. More right-of-way was acquired on the south end, allowing a slighter grade to the higher level.

In April 2010, the Black Hawk County Conservation board signed a \$1,664,143 contract with Peterson Contractors Inc. to replace the trail bridge. Recent weather conditions have slowed progress of the construction scheduled to be completed in 125 working days. Working days are not counted when conditions prevent construction from occurring, so poor weather could push completion of the new bridge into the spring of 2011.

Though both bridges were built in 1912, FEMA determined that the MacFarlane Bridge had “less than five years of serviceable life.” As a consequence, FEMA would not fund the entire replacement of the bridge, since it was near replacement before the 2008 flood. In October 2009, the Iowa Department of Transportation awarded the county a \$250,000 State Recreational Trail Grant. These funds aided the initial design phase of the new bridge. Subsequent applications for Community Development Block and I-Jobs grants were not successful.

Recently, the county partnered with the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments in securing funds. In October 2010, the Iowa Department of Economic Development awarded \$2.966 million in federal disaster recovery enhancement funds to assist in constructing a new bridge. Preliminary plans include a new 728 foot pre-cast, pre-tensioned concrete trail bridge spanning the Cedar River. The county must still find \$150,000 to cover the estimated \$3.2 million project, but they hope the project can be ready for a bid opening in the spring 2011.

Under Construction: Marion's Lindale Ave. Trail:

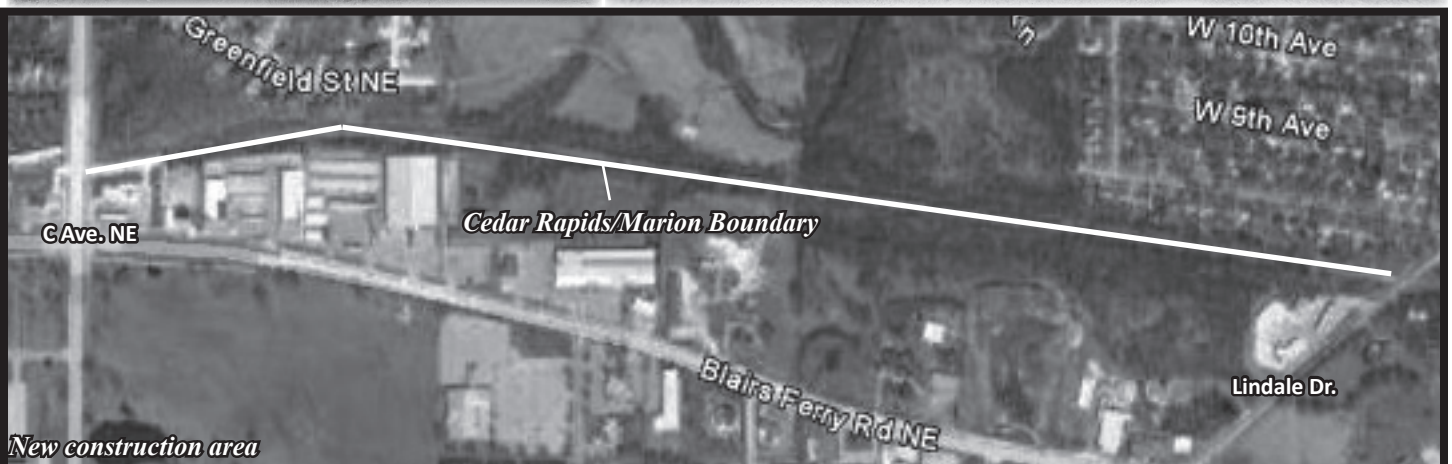
The new trail section connecting Lindale Dr. to C Ave. has begun in Marion. The city of Marion received a \$2,500 Rockwell Collins Green Communities and an Iowa Great Places grant of \$25,000 for the construction of a trail along the right-of-way of an abandoned railroad line to allow pedestrian and bicycle usage between Marion and Cedar Rapids. The grant is funded through the I-Jobs program. This first section is beginning of a trail through Marion. The trail is surfaced to the Marion city limits with the city of Cedar Rapids surfacing it to C Ave.



Cedar Rapids section Nov. 2010



West portal looking at C Ave.



New construction area

2010 Mayors' Ride

Despite the threat of rain, 409 registered riders participated in the 2010 Linn County Mayors' Ride on Monday, September 6th. Brewed Awakening supplied coffee and pastries before the ride. To start the ride, Cedar Rapids Mayor, Ron Corbett read a proclamation declaring September 2010, "Bicycle Safety & Driver Alertness Month."

The ride took participants through neighborhoods on both the west and east of river and along the Cedar River Trail.

Several officials from the surrounding communities were invited to participate. Officials from the city of Cedar Rapids included Cedar Rapids City Council members Kris Gulick and Don Karr, Linn County Supervisor, Lou Barron, Tom Treharne of Marion, Mayor Jason Rabe and Marc Majors from Farifax, Bob Dillon from Center Point and Don Norton of Robbins.

A few registered riders received door prizes generously donated by Hall Bicycle and Northtowne Cycling and Fitness. The 2010 ride was co-spon-

sored by the Cedar Rapids Bicycle Advisory Committee who donated \$500 to the ride. The Linn County Cattlemen's Association provided post-ride hamburgers and drink for \$4. A dollar from each meal sold was donated back to the LCTA. In all, the association sold 190 hamburgers and donated \$200.

Former Cedar Rapids Commissioner, Don Thomas helped raise \$120 in a fill-the-bucket-campaign. Thank you to all the volunteers for the 2010 ride. The ride was a great show of support for bicycling efforts by area communities.



2010 Mayors' Ride
Committee:

John Wauer (Chairperson)
Kari Lammer
Jeff Keiser
Brad Mullin
Gina Weaver
(City of Cedar Rapids)
Nikki Davidson
(Bicycle Advisory
Committee)

2010 Mayors' Ride
Volunteers:

Steve Sandstrom
Larry Howe
Connie Bird
Joe Clark
Lee Niemi
David Turazi
Bruce Nesmith
Mike and Esther Wilson
Steve Hershner
Dave Dvorak
Mary Wauer
Chuck Wehage
Tom Pepper
Carroll Reasoner

Jerry Falta
John Chaimov
Art Rodicek
Jim Green
Bob Ocken
Lisa Paulos
Kay Halloran
Kathy Carstens
Kay Nelson
Jennie Ocken
Bob Brewer
Mike Heffern
Dick Mundy
Dean Barnum
Sam Roff

New Bohemian Half Marathon:



Over 300 participants journeyed 13.1 miles through the southeastern Cedar Rapids during the first annual New-Bohemian Half Marathon on Sunday, September 5, 2010.. The course took runners along the Sac and Fox trail from the Indian Creek Nature Center to the Cole Street. At the Cole Street entrance to the Sac and Fox, LCTA volunteers provided a water stop . Volunteers supplied runners with water and Nunn Sports Drink.. Volunteers included Lindsay Dick, John and Mary Wauer, Jeff Keiser, Tom Pepper, Carol Reasnor, Steve Hershner and Brad Mullin.

Iowa's Land and Water Legacy Amendment

Brad Mullin

In November 2, 2010, nearly two thirds of Iowa voters approved an amendment to the Iowa constitution to create the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund. The process took a decade to get the constitutional amendment on the ballot. The trust fund is an opportunity to provide a permanent, reliable and accountable revenue source to improve water quality and natural areas in Iowa.

The trust fund will be funded when the Iowa Legislature chooses to increase the state sales tax. When it is increased, 3/8 of one cent from sales tax revenue will be allocated to the Natural Resources and Water Recreation Trust Fund. The fund will be accountable to Iowans through a public oversight committee, annual audits and performance reviews for the Iowa legislature. No new administration is created to manage the funds. Instead the funds will be disbursed through a variety of existing local and state agencies, and some will be available for projects of non-profit conservation organizations. However, a sales tax increase is not a top priority on the future legislative agenda. Key politicians, both Republicans and Democrats, are opposed to raising the state sales tax in the "foreseeable" future.

It is estimated that the trust fund

could generate an additional \$150 million per year for Iowa's natural resources and outdoor recreational opportunities once funded. The use of funds is defined in legislation passed by the Iowa General Assembly in May 2010. The largest shares of the fund's annual proceeds would be allocated to fish and wildlife habitat, soil conservation, and watershed protection. According to the legislation, funding will be allocated in the following trail related categories:

1. REAP(13%) (Resource Enhancement and Protection).

Currently, REAP is funded from the state's Environment First Fund (Iowa gaming receipts) and from the sale of the natural resource license plate. The program is authorized to receive \$20 million per year until 2021, but the state legislature sets the amount of REAP funding every year. This year REAP was appropriated \$18 million. When you add license plate and interest income, its total budget is about \$19 million. The trust fund will create \$20 million in additional funds to meet the demands on REAP. This would provide a total of \$40 million from current and future sources.

This program provides funds for a myriad of projects that enhance our natural, cultural, and recreational resources across all of the state at

various levels. Every funding cycle, the majority of REAP applications submitted are not funded. Increase funding for REAP could lead to the funding of more trail miles per year. REAP funds were used in the construction of the Boyson, Prairie Park and Sac and Fox trails in Linn County. Future projects such as the CEMAR, Dry Creek and Robins Trail are already partially funded through the program. The REAP program provides great opportunity for more trail funding for city and county agencies in Linn County.

2. Trails (10%)

The trust fund would allow for \$15 million for the addition of new hiking, walking, biking, and water trails and maintenance of existing trails. At this time, Iowa's trails are owned and managed by various entities such as county conservation boards, the state, cities, and non-profit organizations. These state investments in trails will be able to leverage additional federal, local and private funds. In 2010, the state did not accept any applications for the State Recreational Trail (SRT) program. The trust fund could possibly fully fund such trail-related programs each year. The result would be an increase opportunity for more funding for more miles of trails and maintenance of existing trails in Linn County.



LCTA SUPPORTER FORM

Why would I want to support LCTA?

1. Your support will count you among the hundreds of enthusiastic trail advocates who make up the Linn County Trails Association.
2. By becoming a supporter you will have already begun to play an important role in building a network of connected trails in Linn County and the surrounding area.
3. 95% of all money raised through donations and grants goes directly to build more trails or to improve existing trails. LCTA has been able to multiply this financial support by providing matching funds to secure significant grants.
4. As a supporter, you will receive our quarterly newsletter. Here you can read about trail vacations, upcoming trail events, opportunities to volunteer, and issues that are important to trail development.
5. Supporters are not expected to attend meetings and no one will call you. Of course, if you want to get involved, we will welcome your help.

Learn more about LCTA by visiting our website at www.linncountytrails.org

Information required: (fill out if not on label on other side)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____

Please print the information CLEARLY

Donations to LCTA are Tax Deductible

TRAIL BLAZER	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$100*
TRAIL PARTNERS (Family)	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 35
TRAIL SCOUT	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 20

If you provide your email address, we will send future reminders via email and will add you to the LCTA email distribution list, which is used to provide information on trail-related events to supporters.

* At the Trail Blazer level, supporters also receive the "Advocate," the newsletter of the Iowa Trails Council.

Please consider an additional donation for NEW TRAIL DEVELOPMENT \$ _____

Mail donations to:
Linn County Trails Association
PO Box 2681 Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

*Please check your mailing label for your
Support Renewal Date.*

*If you renew without our sending you a
reminder, it saves us time & money.*

So PLEASE - Renew in a timely manner.

THANKS!

If you are not already a supporter, please consider helping us.

Linn County Trails Association
P.O. Box 2681
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-2681

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Cedar Rapids Mayor Ron Corbett starts the 2010
Mayors' Ride at Ellis Park.