

Trail Connections

Spring 2013

The Quarterly Newsletter Published by the Linn County Trails Association



President's Message:

I hope everyone has been able to get out and enjoy our trails this summer and that all of you had a safe RAGBRAI!

While some of us have been out having fun using our local trails systems, it is important to note that a group of tireless volunteers has been at work serving Linn County Trails Association in various ways. Such as, volunteering at the Cedar Rapids Farmers Market - providing information on area trails, celebrating National Trails day, checking bikes in & out at the corral; supporting "Meet Me at the Market" activities at NewBo, and meeting with various governmental boards to support trails development.

All of these activities are essential to get our message out about the importance of trails.

There are several more Farmers Markets, "Meet Me at the Market" Thursdays, and our Mayors' Bike Ride is coming up over Labor Day so you can still volunteer and help spread the word on trails!

Several exciting trail projects are taking place this summer though some will be seen faster than others:

First, we are hopeful that paving of the Lindale Trail (connecting the Boyson Trail with C Ave NE) will be completed soon. John Wauer has met with the City of Marion City Council and City of Cedar Rapids Infrastructure Committee - all feedback has been positive so far and funding is available.

Second, the Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMPO) has continued to support trail funding and will be taking action at their meetings in July and August to provide funding for design of projects like the CEMAR Trail. This is important because there won't be any delay when construction funding becomes available.

LCTA will continue to provide information on CMPO activities because there are many exciting plans underway that will significantly expand trail corridors and connections. We are planning to have a presentation specifically on listed CMPO trail projects at an upcoming Board meeting – please plan to attend!

Our next LCTA meeting is Monday, September 9th, 7:00 PM, United Way Building – 317 7th Ave SE, Cedar Rapids and all our meetings are normally the 2nd Monday of the month.

Hope to see you there as we share information on ways you can help develop (and maintain) trails in our area!

Thank you and hope to see you on a trail sometime soon!

Steve Hershner
LCTA President

LCTA Officers

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Brad Mullin

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Tom Neenan (Iowa Trails Council)



Upcoming Events

LCTA Board Meeting
Monday, August 12, 7:00pm
Location: United Way of East Central Iowa
317 7th Avenue SE,
Cedar Rapids

LCTA Board Meeting
Monday, September 9, 7:00pm
Location: United Way of East Central Iowa
317 7th Avenue SE,
Cedar Rapids

LCTA Board Meeting
Monday, October 14, 7:00pm
Location: United Way of East Central Iowa
Cedar Rapids, IA

All meetings are open to the public.

Sign up to receive recent updates on trail news and events,
visit the Linn County Trails Association's website at

www.linncountytrails.org



Find LCTA on facebook @
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Follow LCTA on Twitter @
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*Trail Connections is the quarterly publication of the
Linn County Trails Association.*

*It is published January, April, July and October
Articles may be submitted as an MS Word or text file.
Typed, printed or clearly handwritten articles are also ac-
cepted. 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

Spring 2013



Separated Trails	Miles	Surface	Remarks
Bowling Street Trail	1.8	Asphalt	From 50th Street SW to Wilson Avenue
Boyson Trail	2.4	Crushed Limestone	Follows Indian Creek, Marion
Cedar River Trail	13	Asphalt	Cedar Rapids and Hiawatha (ADT)
Cedar Valley Nature Trail	20.5	Asphalt/Crushed Limestone	Paved from Boyson Rd. to Schultz Rd.
CEMAR Trail	0.6	Asphalt	From 20th to 29th St. NE
CRT Lake Loop	1.6	Asphalt	Around Cedar Lake
Ellis Trail	3	Asphalt/Concrete	From Ellis Park to Downtown
Grant Wood Trail	8.5	Natural	Through Eastern Linn County in 3 segments
Hoover Nature Trail	2.7	Asphalt	76th Ave. SW to Ely Park (ADT)
Kirkwood Connector Trail	1.2	Concrete	From Ely Rd. to Kirkwood Campus
Krumholtz Trail	.75	Crushed Limestone	Marion: Thomas Park to Highway 100
Lindale Trail	1	Crushed Limestone	From Lindale Dr. West to C Ave.
Robins Trail	0.7	Asphalt	Along Main St, Robins. Connects to CVNT
Sac and Fox Trail	7.1	Crushed Limestone	*Closed from Rosedale Rd. to Mt.Vernon Rd.*
Park Trails	Miles	Surface	Remarks
Beverly Park Trail System	5	Natural	SW CR: Singletrack Mountain Bike trails
Cedar Greenbelt Trail	4.7	Natural	Near Indian Creek Nature Center/Sac and Fox Trail
Cherokee Park Trail	1	Crushed Limestone	West Side: Edgewood to Wiley Blvd.
Cherry Hill Park Trail	0.8	Crushed Limestone	NW Cedar Rapids: Cherry Hill Park
Fay Clark Memorial Trail	0.7	Asphalt	Hiawatha: Fay Clark Memorial Park
Fross Park	1.2	Crushed Limestone	NW Center Point
Huston Park Trail	0.11	Asphalt	SE Cedar Rapids
Jackson Park Trail	0.4	Crushed Limestone	NW Cedar Rapids near Jackson Elementary School
Lowe Park Trail	0.5	Asphalt	Marion: N. 10th St to 35th Ave
Matsell Bridge Natural Area Trail System	8.4	Natural	NE Linn County, near Viola
Morgan Creek Trail System	3.8	Natural	NW Cedar Rapids
Nixon Trail	0.75	Crushed Limestone	NE Cedar Rapids: Around Nixon School
Noelridge Park Trail	0.8	Crushed Limestone	NE Cedar Rapids: Noelridge Park
Pinicon Ridge Park Trail System	12	Natural	Five park trails near Central City
Prairie Park Fishery Trail	2	Asphalt	SE Cedar Rapids: Prairie Park Fishery
Reed Park Trail	0.25	Crushed Limestone	SW Cedar Rapids near Taylor Elementary School
Squaw Creek Park Trail System	4	Natural	Located within Squaw Creek Park plus 1 mile singletrack mountain bike trail
Thomas Park Singletrack	2	Natural	Singletrack mountain bike trail
Van Buren Park Trail	0.5	Crushed Limestone	SW Cedar Rapids near Van Buren Elementary School
Wickiup Hill Outdoor Learning Center Trail System	5	Natural	5 mile network near Toddville

CEMAR Trail Activities

-Brad Mullin

After decades of planning, the completion of the CEMAR Trail is near. The east-west trail will connect the cities of Cedar Rapids and Marion using both on-street bicycle facilities and separated multi-use trails. When completed, the nearly 7 mile trail will cost an estimated 5 million dollars. Connectivity is one of the important aspects of the trail in accelerating its future development. Connecting the two cities, the trail will serve as an important recreational amenity and commuter path between each community.

Corridor's Commitment to Construction:

For years, the CEMAR project has been hampered by its enormous cost. A majority of the trail was to use the Old Milwaukee Railroad right-of-way. After the abandonment of the railroad, most of the right-of-way was sold to several proprietors. The reacquisition of the right-of-way, or easements to use the right way, is a costly endeavor. Inability to acquire right-of-way has led to several modifications of the original planned route of the trail. These changes have added additional cost to the project over the past years.

The cities of Cedar Rapids and Marion have worked diligently to secure funding in the form of federal, state and local grants. Many of these grant awards fund only small sections of the trail. However, a recent decision by the Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMPO) has promised funding for the completion of the entire trail. On April 19, 2012, the Corridor MPO decided to dedicate 80% of its federal funding over the next five years towards trail and trail component projects.

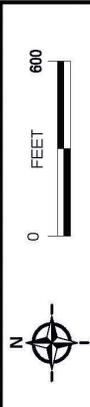
The CEMAR trail was given the highest priority among trail projects. The CMPO voted unanimously to commit \$4.5 million in federal and state transportation funds it controls to the project. These funds will be available as early as 2016. All aspects of the trail development (design/alignment studies, property acquisitions, easements, and actual construction) are funded with the money committed by the CMPO. This commitment has allowed cities to move forward on developing plans for the CEMAR Trail.

City of Marion Development:

Forty percent of the CEMAR Trail project is located within the Marion city limits. Marion has categorized its CEMAR trail development into three sections. The trail will extend from the Cedar Rapids city limits north to the intersection of 7th Street and 7th Avenue in Marion. The first phase begins at the Cedar Rapid/Marion city boundary and ends at the south-side of Highway 100. The proposed route will use an alignment through Faulkes Woods Park along Indian Creek. Several easements and/or property acquisitions are needed to complete the alignment north outside the park. Currently, there is no trail development along this section.

The second section of Marion's CEMAR Trail was completed in 2012. The trail extends north of Highway 100 to Thomas Park. Currently referred to as the Krumboltz Trail, the section was funded by a \$150,000 REAP grant for a 1,000 foot bridge over Indian Creek in 2011(*below*). The third section will connect Thomas Park to the newly planned Marion Central Corridor Trail. The construction of a separated trail bridge off of the 7th Avenue Bridge over Indian Creek is planned. The trail would follow the old railroad right-of-way to the intersection of 7th Ave. and 7th St. The city will construct a roundabout at the intersection to assist trail users crossing the intersection. At this intersection the CEMAR Trail will connect to the trail that will run parallel to the new 6th Ave, the Marion Central Corridor Trail. Almost of the CEMAR Trail in Marion will be a separated multi-use trail and the city plans to use a portion of the CMPO funding to pave the entire length of trail.





**CEMAR TRAIL PHASE 1
2013 INTERIM PLAN**



325012-02
AMEND. No. 2

Map Courtesy of the City of Cedar Rapids.

Cedar Rapids CEMAR Development:

Sixty percent of the CEMAR trail is within the Cedar Rapids city limits. Like Marion, the development of the CEMAR trail through Cedar Rapids is broken down into three sections. The trail will begin at the H Ave. trail parking lot and end at the Cedar Rapids/ Marion boundary. The city plans to incorporate both on street bicycle facilities, sidewalks and separated multi-use trails to complete the CEMAR Trail throughout Cedar Rapids.

The first phase of the CEMAR Trail connects the Cedar Lake Loop of the Cedar River Trail with 20th St. N.E. Already, this phase has received \$878,000 in state and federal funding. The original plans involved using most of the Old Milwaukee railroad right-of-way. Over the years, the right-of-way has been developed. The city has worked with several business and organizations to obtain easements. The development of phase one of the trail was delayed by the Terex plant closing in 2009. The original alignment planned to use an easement around the property. With the possibility of the right-of-way not available, the city of Cedar Rapids decided to alternate routes for the trail around the property.

In 2013, the city developed an Interim CEMAR Phase 1 Plan. Completion of the Interim Plan is scheduled to occur in two parts in 2013 and 2014. The 2013 Interim Plan will convert H Ave. NE to a useable bicycle and pedestrian route. In addition, it will route trail users around the Terex property. This phase of the project will change a two block segment of H Ave. from two or three traffic lanes with on-street parking to two traffic lanes with no-street parking. This change will require removal of two half-block segments of on-street parking on the north side of H Avenue NE between Center Point Road and Oakland Road. The city will paint bicycle lanes and sharrows on H Ave. to Maplewood Drive.

The 2013 Interim Route will direct pedestrians north on Oakland Road to J Ave., then east to Maplewood Drive. Several sidewalk improvements and new sidewalk construction are part of the Interim pedestrian route. Cy-

clists will use H Ave. to Maplewood Drive. Trail users will travel north on Maplewood Dr. and then proceed east on K Ave. to Prairie Drive with pedestrian traffic. New signage for cyclists and motorists is scheduled for installation along the route. These changes are scheduled for the completion in the fall 2013.

The city will continue improvements along the Interim route in 2014. The 2014 Interim Plan includes road improvements to H Avenue from Shaver Road to Daniels Park, along the south and east sides of Daniels Park to J Avenue, along Maplewood Dr., from J Avenue to K Avenue, and on K Avenue from Maplewood Drive to Prairie Drive. K Avenue NE., an existing seal coat street, will be upgraded to a paved street with curb & gutter, storm sewer and other utility improvements. Additional improvements will add new storm sewer to H Avenue from 12th Street to Center Point Road to address the recurring storm water issues at the H Avenue and Center Point Road intersection. Currently, the construction of a separated trail within Daniels Park, on the south and east side, is included in the 2014 Interim Plan.

In June 2013, Mount Mercy University announced the purchasing of the majority of the former Terex property. The University plans to develop the area into a multi-purpose athletic facility. Initial conceptual plans may allow for the inclusion of a separated multi-use trail within complex. The trail alignment may follow close to the original alignment proposed before the Terex plant closure. In the end, trail users may have two CEMAR trail options: a northern and southern route to 20th St. NE.

(map courtesy of Mount Mercy University)



The Interim CEMAR Phase 1 Plan will connect with Cedar Rapids' second phase of the CEMAR Trail beginning at 20th St. NE. In the spring of 2011, the 1/6 mile was opened for use. The 12-foot-wide trail sits in the middle of a 120 foot abandoned railroad right-of-way. The city acquired \$150,000 through at 2006 State of Iowa Recreation Trails Fund grant to fund help construction. Neighborhood meetings were held September 10 and November 22, 2010 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. The second phase ends at 29th St. NE.

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The final phase will connect the trailhead at 29th St. NE with the Marion city limits. Acquisition of right-of-way is one obstacle associated with this phase of the CEMAR trail. With no railroad right-of-way available, the city is working to acquire trail easements with property owners along the alignment. Some land owners, such as Raining Rose, have granted easements. Several other ones have been reluctant. Similar to the first phase, the original alignment could be modified if easements cannot be obtained.

The second issue with the third phase is the crossing of 1st Ave. In the past, several alignment studies were completed involving an overpass, underpass and at-grade crossing of the trail at 1st Ave. Consensus suggests that an underpass of 1st Ave is the most

feasible solution, especially with Raining Rose granting an easement on the east side. The underpass would be part of a reconstruction project of 1st Ave, from 27th St. NE. to 40th Street, which is scheduled to occur after 2015.

Conclusion

When finished, the CEMAR Trail will be the main east-west route between Cedar Rapids and Marion. The trail's location is within a large population of residents. Due to the difficulty of obtaining easements and property for the trail, the CEMAR trail is an example of a new trail philosophy. The trail will incorporate both on-street bicycle facilities and separated multi-use trails to create a viable resource for the community. The trail is demonstrative of cooperation of the two communities, Marion and Cedar Rapids, in creating an asset that connects the two cities. With the CMPO funds available, the goal is the have the entire trail completed by 2020.



A cyclist enjoys Phase 2 of the CEMAR Trail



Current K Ave. NE

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

Brad Mullin

National Trails Day



Since the creation of the American Hiking Society's National Trails Day® in 1993, the program has inspired and engaged thousands of individuals, trail clubs, businesses and government agencies worldwide. National Trails Day® encourages the public and trail enthusiasts nationwide to learn about and celebrate trails. It also provides an opportunity to thank volunteers, public agencies and outdoor-minded businesses for their support in developing and maintaining trails. The Downtown Farmers' Market theme for Saturday, August 3rd is "Bike to the Market." So join other area cycling advocates, ride down the Market and park it at the corral. It is a great opportunity to show the community's support for cycling facilities as many of the residents choose cycling as means of transportation and not just recreation. For more information about the 2013 Downtown Farmers' Market visit: cedarrapids.org.

On Saturday, June 1st, the Linn County Trails Association, Cedar Rapids Bicycle Advisory Committee and the Linn Area Mountain Biking Association rewarded Cedar Rapids Downtown Farmers Market Bike Corral users with free donated food and beverages. Over 100 cyclists used the corral on the first day of the farmer's market as part of the 2013 American Hiking Society's National Trail Day celebrations.



2013 NTD Volunteers:

*Vicky Evans
Leland Freie
Mike and Esther Wilson
Dean Barnum
Paul Fiegen
John Wauer
Larry Scott
Michelle and Ken Barker
Rob Johnson
Steve Hershner*



2013 National Trails Day Breakfast Sponsors



City of Cedar Rapids
Bicycle Advisory
Committee and
Bicycle Ambassadors
Progress to a Bicycle Friendly Community



DOWNTOWN FARMERS' MARKET :

In addition, the first Saturday in June was the beginning of the Cedar Rapids Downtown Farmers' Market. This year, the Linn County Trail Association is assisting in providing free and secure bicycle parking at the Downtown Farmers' Markets. The corral is located in Greene Square Park along the Cedar River Trail. The corral service allows for area residents to choose cycling as an alternate means of transportation to the market. In addition, the corral provides information on current trail and bicycle activities in the area. The corral service is available from 7:30am to noon each market. It is free service but donations are accepted.



2013 Downtown Farmers' Market Schedule

- June 1
- June 15
- July 6
- July 20
- August 3
- August 17
- September 7
- September 21

2013 LINN COUNTY MAYORS' RIDE

Come and celebrate the City of Cedar Rapids Bronze level designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community by the American League of Bicyclists. The ride is Labor Day, Monday September 2nd. Tentative plans include the same route as last year with a 9:00 am start at Ellis Park. In addition, volunteers for the ride are needed for various duties that day.

In 2010, Cedar Rapids Mayor Ron Corbett proclaimed September as "Bicycle Safety & Driver Alertness Month" in Cedar Rapids. All residents are encouraged to identify and learn the various aspects of bicycle and motor vehicle safety as it relates to sharing our public roads in an effort to make Cedar Rapids' streets some of the safest in the state. The Mayors' Ride is a great opportunity to practice safe riding and trail use. Your participation is important in illustrating the support for trails and bicycle amenities throughout 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): _____

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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 |

* 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 \$ _____

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.

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. All donations are
tax deductible.*

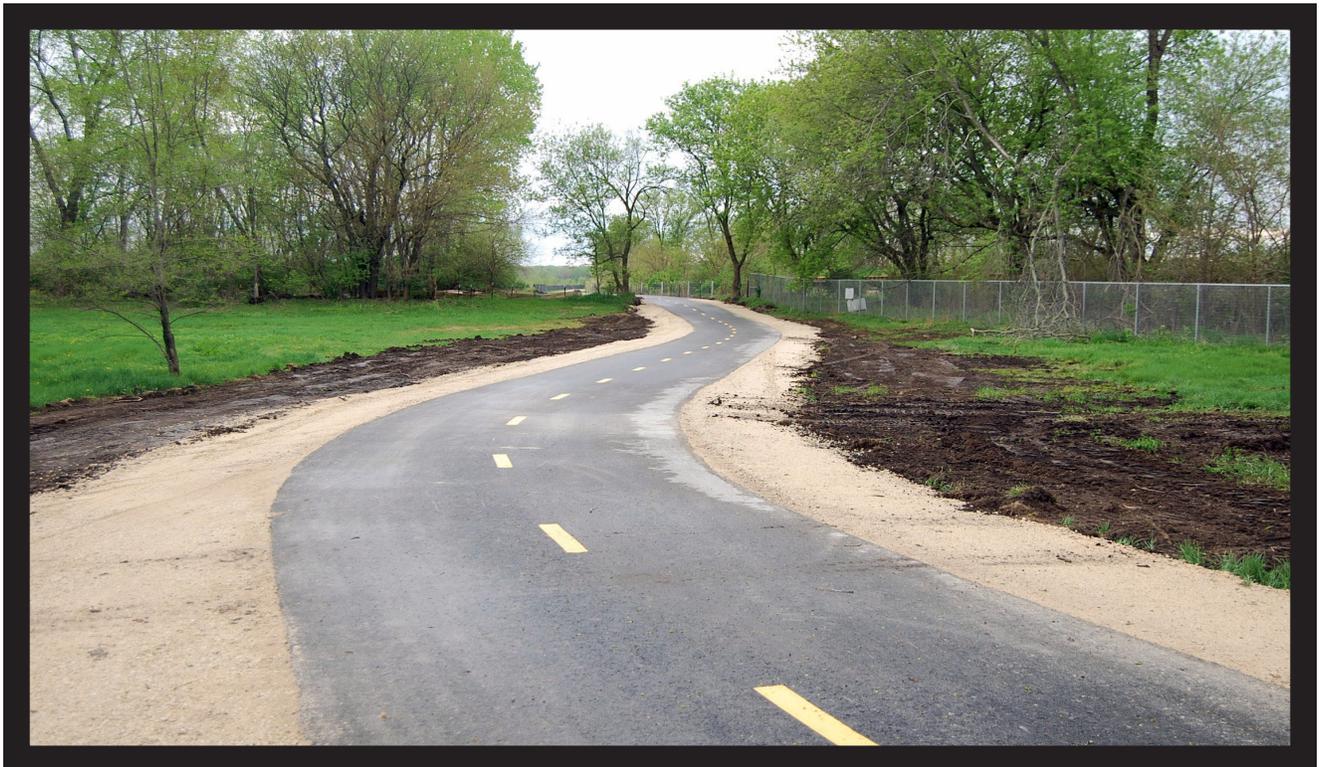
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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

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The new section connecting Prairie Park Fishery Trail and the Sac and Fox Trail