

# APRIL 2024

ConnectCR Update



## Construction Season is Here at Cedar Lake

After years of planning and fundraising, ConnectCR is now closer to reality. This spring and summer expect to see even more construction at Cedar Lake as crews begin installing ConnectCR amenities. Shoreline expansion on Cedar Lake's east side is now underway. This enhanced shoreline will allow for a new trail section to run along the lakefront between the Sag Wagon and the lake. Previously, the trail would extend over to the street and trail users would have to use Shaver Road for a stretch before re-joining the actual trail again on the lake's south side. When complete, the trail will allow users to be lakeside around the lake's entire perimeter. Other amenities will follow throughout the summer and fall.

You can see the latest Master Plan for Cedar Lake here:  
<https://connectcr.org/cedar-lake-master-plan>

## NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

Cedar Lake Construction

Bridge Demolition

ConnectCR in the Community



## Cedar Lake Construction: Lots of Moving Parts

Initially, Cedar Lake and surrounding businesses were not included in the city's flood protection plans, but as interest grew in restoring Cedar Lake, the City of Cedar Rapids moved to include the lake and neighboring businesses to protect the area from possible flooding of the Cedar River. Work on the flood protection levee to the west of Cedar Lake is underway by the Army Corps of Engineers and is not part of the ConnectCR project. However, the timing of that levee work impacts ConnectCR and when its new enhancing amenities can be installed. In addition to the Army Corps, the State of Iowa's Department of National Resources (DNR) is also involved in a restoration project involving Cedar Lake. The City of Cedar Rapids and a consulting firm are coordinating all these moving parts and providing regular updates to the ConnectCR Governing Board, which continues to monitor the project's progress and offer guidance.



### Out With the Old, To Make Way for the New

The old CRANDIC/Rock Island Railroad Bridge is no more. Demolition and salvage crews removed the remaining remnants of the bridge over the winter months. The old bridge was partially washed away by the flood of 2008, but a portion of it remained on the river's east side. ConnectCR initially had hoped to use piers or part of the old bridge in the design of the new bridge, but engineers who assessed the old bridge determined it would not meet the safety standards of the modern era. So instead, salvage crews carefully preserved pieces of the old bridge, which will now be incorporated into signage and landscaping on the new bridge landings and park areas.

You can watch a video about the old bridge removal here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek4Ac35doAs>



### Timeline for the New Alliant Energy LightLine

We are often asked about when work on the new bridge will begin. Expect a groundbreaking for the new Alliant Energy LightLine in November or December of this year. It's not a coincidence that the old bridge demolition and the new bridge construction are happening during the winter months. Construction crews are taking advantage of lower water levels in the Cedar River during the winter months to work on the bridge site. Even with a groundbreaking in late 2024, plans are still on track for the new LightLine to be complete by the end of 2025, weather permitting.

You can see the latest renderings for the Alliant Energy LightLine on the ConnectCR website here:

<https://connectcr.org/bridge-renderings>

## ConnectCR in the Community

Thanks to the following for hosting ConnectCR and having us provide updates:

MethWick

Czech Village-NewBo District SSMID

EcoFest CR 2024

Representatives from ConnectCR will be at the following events to offer updates and answer questions:

May 11, 2024: Bever Park Pavilion for the [MPO Bike Ride](#)

June 1, 2024: Cedar Rapids Downtown Farmers Market

If you or your organization would like to hear about the latest on our community betterment project, please email us at:

[ConnectCR.org@gmail.com](mailto:ConnectCR.org@gmail.com)

You can also find updates on our website and Facebook page:

[www.connectcr.org](http://www.connectcr.org)

[www.facebook.com/connectcr.org](https://www.facebook.com/connectcr.org)

