

OCTOBER 2023

ConnectCR Update



Cedar Lake

The Army Corps of Engineers continues their construction of the flood control levee, which will help protect Cedar Lake from the river in the event of a flood. The state DNR has dewatered the lake and sediment is being removed to make the lake deeper and allow for the levee piling to be placed.

The first ConnectCR amenity to go in will be a lakeside loop trail. Plans call for expanding the east shoreline, so the trail will run by the lake, all the way around the lake. Letting for this portion of the project is scheduled for late this fall, with construction beginning in early 2024.

The lake's master plan has been updated and can be found here:

<https://connectcr.org/cedar-lake-master-plan>

A noticeable change in the plan is the location of the boardwalk over the lake; it will now connect to the wetlands area on the lake's northwest side.

If you would like to see a flyover version of the lake's construction, board member Steve Sovern created this drone video, complete with narration:

<https://connectcr.org/f/video-aerial-tour-of-work-at-cedar-lake>

This summer, the City of Cedar Rapids bought property to the southwest of Cedar Lake. This purchase will provide additional land for the flood protection levee and a flood plain. More on this investment by the city can be found in this article in The Gazette: <https://www.thegazette.com/local-government/cedar-rapids-buys-land-near-cedar-lake-for-10m/>

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

Cedar Lake

Alliant Energy LightLine

ConnectCR in the Community



To the north of Cedar Lake (and not an actual part of the ConnectCR project), the City of Cedar Rapids has removed the concrete in McCloud Run.

This popular trout stream will become a naturalized waterway for trout and fishers, with bike paths and benches beside it. A trail head with additional parking will also be nearby, allowing access to the Cedar Valley Nature Trail off Shaver Road.

All of this work at the lake has not deterred the pelicans from making their migratory stop at Cedar Lake. The birds created quite a spectacular scene when they stopped here in September.

Photo Courtesy: Darci Bunting/Sag Wagon

Lake construction and restoration is scheduled to be finished in 2025.



The Alliant Energy LightLine

In August we celebrated the upcoming demolition and salvaging of the old CRANDIC/Rock Island Railroad Bridge with our ReCycle the Bridge event at Mount Trashmore. Many of our donors and supporters gathered at the top of Mount Trashmore as we said good-bye to the old bridge to make way for the new Alliant Energy LightLine.

Guests were treated to make-your-own trail mix (it was National Trail Mix Day after all), as well as samples of Mount Trashmore Trailmix beer from Lion Bridge Brewery. A highlight of the event was a contest to see who could blow up a bike inner tube the fastest. Contestants were encouraged to think of their assigned bike pumps as dynamite detonators and pump air into the tubes until they made a demolition “boom.” Former Mayor Ron Corbett won the contest and the prizes, including swag from our friends at Mount Trashmore (Cedar Rapids/Linn County Solid Waste Agency) and a ConnectCR t-shirt. More event photos are on page 3, courtesy of Ed Kempf.

A big thank you to our co-sponsors of this event: Alliant Energy, Cedar Rapids/Linn County Solid Waste Agency, and our public partner in this project, the City of Cedar Rapids.

The actual demolition of the bridge is slated to begin in November and will happen over the winter months when the river is lower and less likely to flood. Portions of the old bridge will be salvaged or “recycled” and used in the historical and directional signage which will be located near the new pedestrian trail bridge.

Groundbreaking for the new bridge is scheduled for late 2024 with completion in 2025.

Links to stories about ReCycle the Bridge:

KGAN: <https://cbs2iowa.com/news/local/cedar-rapids-officials-celebrate-planned-demolition-of-the-old-crandic-rock-island-railroad-bridge-alliant-energy-lightline-mount-trashmore-cedar-river-ney-bohemian-czech-village>

CBJ: <https://corridorbusiness.com/celebration-marks-end-of-crandic-bridge-beginning-of-lightline/>

The Gazette: <https://www.thegazette.com/local-government/crandic-bridge-coming-down-clearing-way-for-new-pedestrian-bike-bridge/>

And, here's a link to a slideshow presentation, featuring old and new photos of the bridge, which played at the ReCycle the Bridge event: <https://connectcr.org/from-old-to-new>



ConnectCR in the Community

Thank you to the following for having ConnectCR share an update on our project:

- Collins Aerospace Community Charitable Advisory Committee
- Oak Hill Jackson Neighborhood Association
- Cedar Rapids Downtown Farmers Market
- Corvair Bike Club

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

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

www.connectcr.org

www.facebook.com/connectcr.org

