

NEW BEGINNINGS

With the demolition of the century old bridge, came the construction of the "New" McFarlane Bridge. This new structure was built at a higher elevation with four T-piers to reduce the surface area which in turn will provide less impedance to water flow during high water events.



Bridge Construction Funded by:

Iowa Economic Development Authority
*Community Development Block Grant
Iowa Department of Transportation
*Iowa State Recreational Trail Grants

Bridge Design Created by:

Shuck-Britson Inc.
2409 Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50312

Snyder & Associates, Inc.
5005 Bowling St. SW Suite A
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

Construction Completed by:

Herberger Construction Co. Inc.
2508 West 2nd Ave.
Indianola, IA 50125



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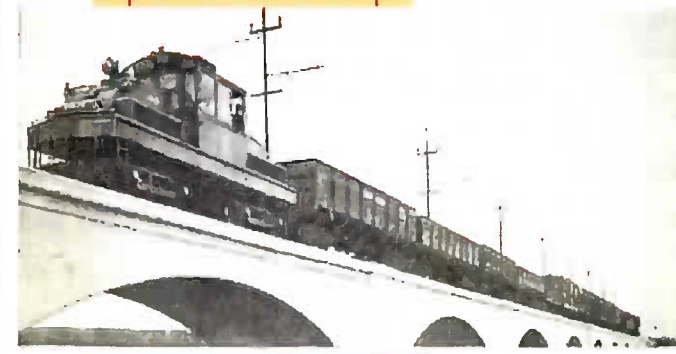
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The Full Historical Report is available at:
www.blackhawkcountyparks.com
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THE HISTORY OF MCFARLANE BRIDGE



CEDAR VALLEY ROAD

A LOOK BACK AT THE
HISTORY OF
THE WCF&N RAILWAY

IN THE BEGINNING

The Waterloo, Cedar Falls and Northern (WCF&N) interurban rail line (aka, the "Cedar Valley Road") was an electric rail line that provided passenger and freight service between Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, Cedar Falls, and Waverly, IA.

The McFarlane Bridge was built in 1912-13 by the Gould Construction Company of Davenport, Iowa, using the same design as the Evansdale Bridge. In a July 19, 1913 article in the *Electric Railway Journal* it states that, "all bridges and culverts were designed and built under the supervision of T.E. (Thomas Edsall) Rust, Chief Engineer of the Waterloo, Cedar Falls & Northern Railway."

The McFarlane Bridge was the largest of the concrete arch bridges built along the WCF&N line and appears to have been the longest reinforced concrete bridge in the state.



Construction Photo of the Mason City Stewart Ave. Bridge in 1914. Similar Construction as McFarlane Bridge.

LEGACY



Photo of the McFarlane Bridge in use soon after its construction. Published in the 1915 Electric Traction

When it was completed, this rail line was considered among the better built inter-urban lines in the state and was called "a steam railroad with a trolley wire over it" because of the substantial nature of its construction.

By 1917, the WCF&N was making passenger runs between Waterloo and Cedar Rapids in 2.5 hours making all stops along the way. In addition, the railway operated a freight belt line around the factory district of Waterloo. The line delivered raw materials to the plants and took away finished products.

Another service of the railway company was to sell electricity to the surrounding towns such as La Porte City and Gilbertville at a time when these towns did not have their own power plants.

Products in general carried over the rail line included hogs, grain, quarried rock, cans of cream and many other miscellaneous products.

IN THE END

The Waterloo line was fully integrated into the Illinois Cental system in 1970 and continued to haul freight until the line was abandoned in 1973 and the tracks were removed.

The idea of converting the old rail line into a bike trail was introduced at a meeting in 1977 between the Benton, Black Hawk, Buchanan & Linn County Conservation Boards and the Iowa Conservation Commission (now known as the IA Department of Natural Resources).

The abandoned rail line was finally developed as the Cedar Valley Nature Trail in 1984 and is part of the American Discovery Trail System.

Record flooding in 2008 delivered major damage to the trail leaving the McFarlane Bridge along with others damaged beyond repair.



Photo showing McFarlane Bridge deck after the floods of 2008.