Bill Riley Trail

Park and Recreation Board...Did You Know?

February 27, 2018
Bill Riley Trail - Overview

- Approximately 3.5 Miles
- First paved in 1973
- Reconstructed 2006
- Named after broadcast personality and bicycling advocate, Bill J. Riley

Greenwood/Ashworth to Water Works Park to Gray's Lake Park
Who was Bill J. Riley?

- Iowa Falls Native | 1920 - 2006
- KRNT Radio Host
- KRNT Television Broadcaster at Iowa State Fair in 1946
- Initiated Iowa State Fair Talent Search in 1959 > “Mr. State Fair”
- City of Des Moines Park & Recreation Board Member
- Executive for Hawkeye Cablevision (Mediacom)
- 2004 Inductee of Iowa Rock ‘n Roll Music Association’s Hall of Fame
In 1969, the Parks Director brought the Ashworth Trail to the attention of the Park and Rec. Board. Although the trail was a highly desirable asset, it was in disrepair and there was no funding for improvements.

Bill immediately thought of his horde of young followers and how they could help. Bill’s idea to use the youngsters evolved into a bicycle marathon fundraiser which resulted in the trail being paved in 1973.
Bill’s Bicycle Marathons
Trail Development History

1924 – Ashworth Park gifted to City of Des Moines

Pre-1936 – Informal southern access to Ashworth in place “Ashworth Trail”

1969 – Ashworth Trail “muddy mess in sad need of repair”

1970 – Park Board member, Bill Riley begins organizing trail fundraiser

1972 – Bill Riley hosts 50-mile bicycle marathon to raise $12,000 for trail

1973 – Ashworth Trail paved with asphalt and renamed Bill Riley Trail

2006 – Trailhead constructed and trail widened to 10 feet

2009 – Trail extended from Water Work Park to SW corner of Gray’s Lake

2017 – Historic railroad truss bridge replaced

2017 – Trailhead updated and asphalt paving assessed
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Bill Riley Trail Amenities

- Limestone Blocks (Vehicle Barriers)
- Information Panel
- Native Plantings and Vegetation
- Benches
- Trail Kiosk
- Bike Racks

Parking Lot (Ashworth Pool and Bill Riley Trail)
Bill Riley Trail Amenities
# Bill Riley Trail Woes

![Image of Bill Riley Trail]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trail</th>
<th>Average Condition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill Riley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Great Western</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walnut Creek</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inter-Urban</td>
<td>8.7</td>
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Sources

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CITY OF DES MOINES
PARKS AND RECREATION