

Cedar River Trail - 40 mi

Hiawatha to Ely - Return

Begin by driving through Cedar Rapids and getting off I-380 at the County Home Road exit headed east. (Exit 28). About 1.5 miles east there will be a parking lot on the south side of the road. Leave your car here.

Head south about 3.5 miles on the Cedar Valley Nature Trail to Hiawatha. In Hiawatha, the trail will become Cedar River Trail, but remain on it.

Pour Sports Bar (food and drink)

At about the 8 mile mark you will pass under I-380 and begin to head around Quaker Oats towards the downtown where you will again pass under I-380.

For about a mile in the downtown you're riding on sidewalks that allow bikes. However; they're narrow, so do take precautions. Watch sidewalk for directions instead of signage. You will reconnect with a paved trail near the river after crossing a large parking lot.

The trail follows the river to a bridge on right crossing into the Czech Village. Cross bridge on left side sidewalk. Beware, the bridge has many gargoyles.

After crossing the bridge, take a left at the small park and head down the trail again.

Just about 1.8 miles from the park, you will see the power plant on right. If you are thirsty, get off trail and onto the road going south. Go underneath the trail overpass to the left and ride a short distance then turn left to follow the river. Stop for a brew at:

The Shack (food and drink)

If the weather is nice; the Shack has an upper deck with tables and a great view of the river.

After the Shack, go back to where you exited the trail, get back on and continue south. After passing underneath highway US 30, there's a trail to the right. Follow the trail to a strip mall and stop for food at:

Jerseys Sport Bar (food and drink)

Go back to the main trail and continue south. You will now be on the Hoover Trail. In about five miles you will arrive in Ely. When you get to Dows Street, take a right and stop for a brew at:

Odie's Bar (food and drink)

End of first leg. Reverse directions to return to start.

There are two option bars that offer food on the return trip; however, they are off the trail (addresses shown)

For a real adventure, stop at JM O'Malley,s. Try to surmise how 13 MelonHeads could fit into that small bar.

