

## First Avenue: Where the World and Council Bluffs Connected

Those First Avenue railroad tracks were annoying. Trains could delay TJ students going from the school to the field house, and back up traffic onto Broadway at 35th Street. They could spoil plans for a fast lunch when they blocked access to the McDonalds and Burger King drive throughs on 16th Street.

Likely not many frustrated students or motorists appreciated that back in a time when Council Bluffs was a major player on the national stage, those tracks were where East ended.



*Thank-you to our corporate members!*

**Bayliss Park Hall**  
[www.baylissparkhall.com](http://www.baylissparkhall.com)

**Frontier Savings Bank**  
[www.frontiersb.com](http://www.frontiersb.com)

**HGM Associates Inc.**  
[www.hgmonline.com](http://www.hgmonline.com)

**McGinn Law Firm**  
[mcginnlawfirm.com](http://mcginnlawfirm.com)

**Red Giant Oil Company**  
[www.redgiantoil.com](http://www.redgiantoil.com)

**Prairie Crossing Vineyard and Winery**  
[www.prairiecrossingwine.com](http://www.prairiecrossingwine.com)

**Real Property Management, LLC**

**Union Pacific Streamliner Federal Credit Union**  
[www.upcu.org](http://www.upcu.org)

Literally. There was no bridge. Despite their ultimate destination, every west-bound passenger and parcel spent some on First Avenue in Council Bluffs.

Thursday, July 22, 7 p.m. at the Council Bluffs Public Library, Brenda Mainwaring, President and CEO of the Iowa West Foundation, and Brandon Garrett, Council Bluffs Community Development Director, will explore the rich history of this original transcontinental path where the world interfaced with Council Bluffs. The speakers will explain how the arrival of these tracks turned a swampland into a part of Council Bluffs, the struggle and skullduggery that went into getting this railroad, why what is platted as a city street doesn't actually contain a street, and how history is being maintained and is continuing with the current FIRST AVE corridor project.

The program is sponsored by Preserve Council Bluffs. Admission is \$5; Historical Society of Pottawattamie County members are admitted at no charge. The library is limiting seating to 45, so advance reservations are strongly recommended. Reserve online at [www.TheHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.TheHistoricalSociety.org) or [www.PreserveCouncilBluffs.org](http://www.PreserveCouncilBluffs.org).

*Photo at top shows First Avenue looking east from near 34th Street. The grain elevators and tracks have since been removed. (Photo courtesy of Brandon Garrett, Community Development director).*