

= Iowa Highway 56 =

Iowa Highway 56 ( Iowa 56 ) is a state highway that runs from west to east in northeastern Iowa . It begins at Iowa Highway 150 in West Union and ends at Iowa Highway 13 south of Elkader . As a largely rural route , Iowa 56 passes through the farmland of Fayette and Clayton counties . Through Elkader and to its eastern end , the highway runs parallel to the Turkey River .

The 24 @-@ mile @-@ long ( 39 km ) highway is an original route from 1920 . It originally extended from West Union to Guttenberg , but it was shortened to Elkader by 1925 . Since then , both the western and eastern endpoints have shifted slightly , but the route otherwise remains the same .

= = Route description = =

Iowa Highway 56 begins at an intersection with Iowa 150 in the southern part of West Union . The route starts out heading to the east , but turns to the south as it leaves the city limits . Approximately one mile ( 1 @-@ 6 km ) south of town , it curves to the south @-@ southeast . Southeast of West Union , Iowa 56 splits the distance between the Volga River and Echo Valley state parks , each approximately two miles ( 3 @-@ 2 km ) from the highway . Being a largely rural route , it passes through the rolling farmland of Fayette and Clayton counties .

It continues to the south @-@ southeast until it nears Elkader . There , it briefly turns to the northeast before turning southeast again along Second Street parallel to the Turkey River . The street plan of Elkader was influenced by the river , which flows from the northwest to southeast through town . Iowa 56 follows Bridge Street for one block ; it heads to the southeast again along First Street . The highway meanders to the south , following the river , to an intersection with Iowa 13 near where that highway crosses the Turkey River . Clayton County 's Turkey River Park is located at the intersection of Iowa 13 and Iowa 56 .

= = History = =

When the Iowa primary highway system was created in 1920 , Primary Road No. 56 extended from West Union eastward to Guttenberg . It began in a different location in West Union than it does today , beginning at Primary Road No. 19 in the northeastern part of town . The route then headed south along Pine Street . In Elkader , Primary Road No. 56 joined Primary Roads No. 10 and No. 13 and crossed the Turkey River on the Keystone Bridge . Shortly after leaving Elkader , Primary Road No. 56 split away from the other two routes and headed east . It turned south at Primary Road No. 20 and the two routes headed to Guttenberg . The Primary Road No. 56 designation ended in Guttenberg .

Primary Road No. 56 's length past Elkader did not last long . By 1925 , the two overlaps were removed and the standalone stretch between them was renumbered Primary Road . No. 128 . By the 1950s , the western end of the route shifted to its current position in West Union . In the early 1980s , a new bypass and Turkey River bridge were built around Elkader . Iowa 13 was shifted onto the bypass and Iowa 56 was extended southward along the former Iowa 13 to the new highway . In 2004 , the two intersections of Iowa 56 along Bridge Street were rebuilt to allow large trucks to take the sharp turns . Roadwork began on June 1 and the street reopened on August 4 .

= = Major intersections = =