



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Cochituate  
Rail Trail**  
*Massachusetts*



# Cochituate Rail Trail

Massachusetts

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## Overview

The Cochituate Rail Trail (CRT) is a multi-use trail that runs almost 4 miles between Framingham and Natick, in the western suburbs of Boston. Passing near streams and wetlands in Framingham and Lake Cochituate in Natick, the trail is a scenic linear park, providing valuable open space through heavily developed sections of both towns. With work underway to connect its southern terminus directly with the MBTA Commuter Rail, this trail is a local asset for recreation, scenery, and connectivity.

## About the Route

The Cochituate Rail Trail's northern endpoint is 1504 Concord St, in the Saxonville neighborhood of

Framingham. Heading south, the trail makes its way through a forested stretch, before crossing underneath I-90 (and soon after, an onramp) via two underpasses. As the trail crosses into Natick, it comes to Lake Cochituate State Park, where its namesake lake boasts options for swimming, boating and fishing. Here, the trail runs southeast along the lake before a narrow stretch of land carries the trail with the lake on either side.

Continuing south from Lake Cochituate, the trail crosses Route 9 via an overpass, and through forested residential communities of Natick. The Cochituate Rail Trail's southern endpoint is at 41 Washington Avenue (Natick) adjacent to Whitney Field/Navy Yard Park, home to a playground and sports fields. The Natick Center MBTA is about 1/3 of a mile further south, and can be accessed via a short walk along Mechanic Street and N Main St. A extension connecting the trail directly to the station is underway.

## Trail History

The trail follows the former Saxonville Branch rail line southeast from Saxonville. Operated from 1846, the Saxonville Branch was used to construct the dam for Lake Cochituate, which supplied water to the City of Boston from 1848 to 1951. Passenger service on the line operated for 90 years, until 1936. The line continuously serviced freight from textile mills in Saxonville until the area's last remaining carpet manufacturer closed in 1973. The line was used for miscellaneous cargo trips until 2006. The first section of the rail-trail was opened in 2015.



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**States:** Massachusetts

**Counties:** Middlesex

Length: 3.3miles

**Trail end points:** 1504 Concord St  
(Framingham) to 41 Washington Ave (Natick)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt, Boardwalk, Concrete

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike, Fishing, Wheelchair  
Accessible, Walking

## Parking & Trail Access

The Cochituate Rail Trail runs between 1504 Concord St (Framingham) and 41 Washington Avenue (Natick) with parking available at both trail ends.

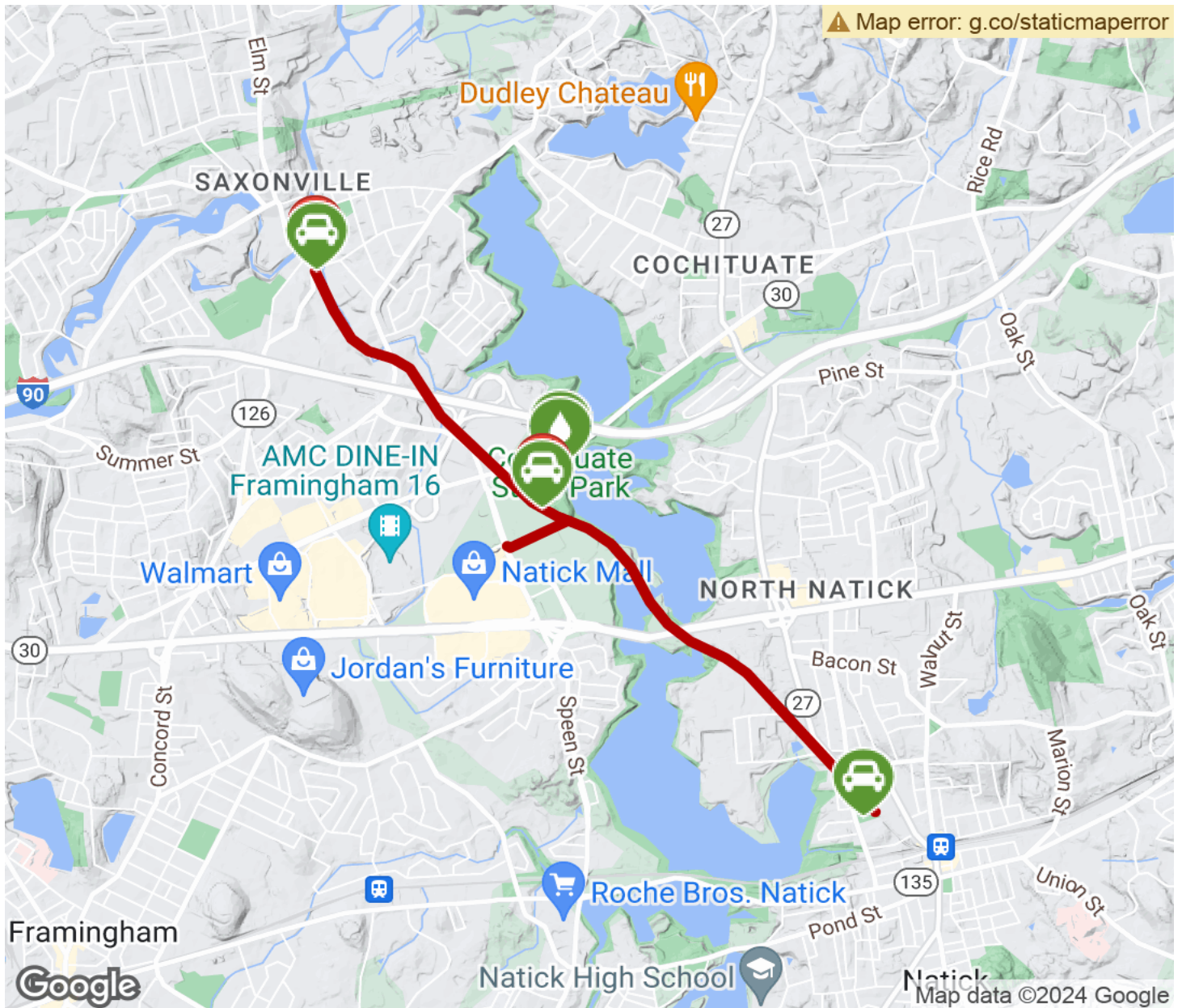
An additional parking option is available at Cochituate State Park, at 43 Commonwealth Rd (Natick)

The Cochituate Rail Trail is easily accessible by MBTA Commuter Rail from Natick Center station. As of 2024, work is underway to directly connect the trail to the station. In the meantime, it is currently accessible by a short walk. If taking your bike aboard a train, please observe the transit agency's rules.



# Cochituate Rail Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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