TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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TrailLink Unlimited ∞

Guides

Phoenix Bike Trail
Massachusetts

The Phoenix Bike Trail cruises through a mixture of surroundings on its relatively short 4-mile journey from the heart of the

The Phoenix Bike Trail cruises through a mixture of surroundings on its relatively short 4-mile journey from the heart of the historical Fairhaven seaport to woodlands and farms on the outskirts of town. The paved rail-trail was named by schoolchildren after Fort Phoenix, less than a mile south of the downtown trailhead and within sight of the first naval battle of the American Revolution.

The trail follows the route of the Fairhaven Branch Railroad, which ran 15 miles between the ferry dock in Fairhaven through Mattapoisett to a main line connection in West Wareham. Launched in 1854, it later came under control of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad from 1893 until 1953. Revived as a trail in 1999, it's the first segment of the future 50-mile South Coast Bikeway that will link Rhode Island with Cape Cod as part of the East Coast Greenway, a developing trail network running from Maine to Florida.

The trail begins across Main Street from the old ferry terminal, where train passengers disembarked for the whaling and fishing center of New Bedford. The dock is used to maintain ferries serving Nantucket, Woods Hole, and Martha's Vineyard. Numerous dining establishments offer fresh seafood and ethnic fare nearby.

One block east of the trailhead, Fort Street is a good place to launch explorations of the city. If you head 1 mile south on lightly traveled Fort Street, you'll find Fort Phoenix, where reenactors fire cannons toward Buzzards Bay. From there, you can walk out on a seawall that protects New Bedford Bay from storm surges. A couple blocks north of the trail on Fort Street, you'll find a collection of ornate European-style buildings constructed by local philanthropist Henry Huttleston Rogers and donated in the late 19th century. They now serve as the Millicent Library (45 Center St.), Town Hall (40 Center St.), and the Unitarian Memorial Church (102 Green St.).

Continuing east on the trail through Fairhaven's residential area, you'll pass through the former site of the Atlas Tack factory before arriving at a modern commercial center at Sconticut Neck Road. At mile 1.6, you'll find the Little Bay Extension that forks to the right and rolls down Sconticut Neck for a mile, providing access to Little Bay along the way.

Continuing east on the Phoenix Bike Trail, you'll traverse wetlands at the head of the Nasketucket River before passing farms and pastures. Just past Shaw Road, you'll enter Plymouth County and the beginning of the Mattapoisett Rail Trail, which will one day run 4.5 miles along Buzzards Bay to the town of Mattapoisett; it's currently just over a mile in length.

Phoenix Bike Trail
Massachusetts

States: Massachusetts

Counties: Bristol

Length: 4miles

Trail end points: Main Street to Mattapoisett
Rail Trail at Shaw Road

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike,Inline
Skating,Wheelchair Accessible,Horseback
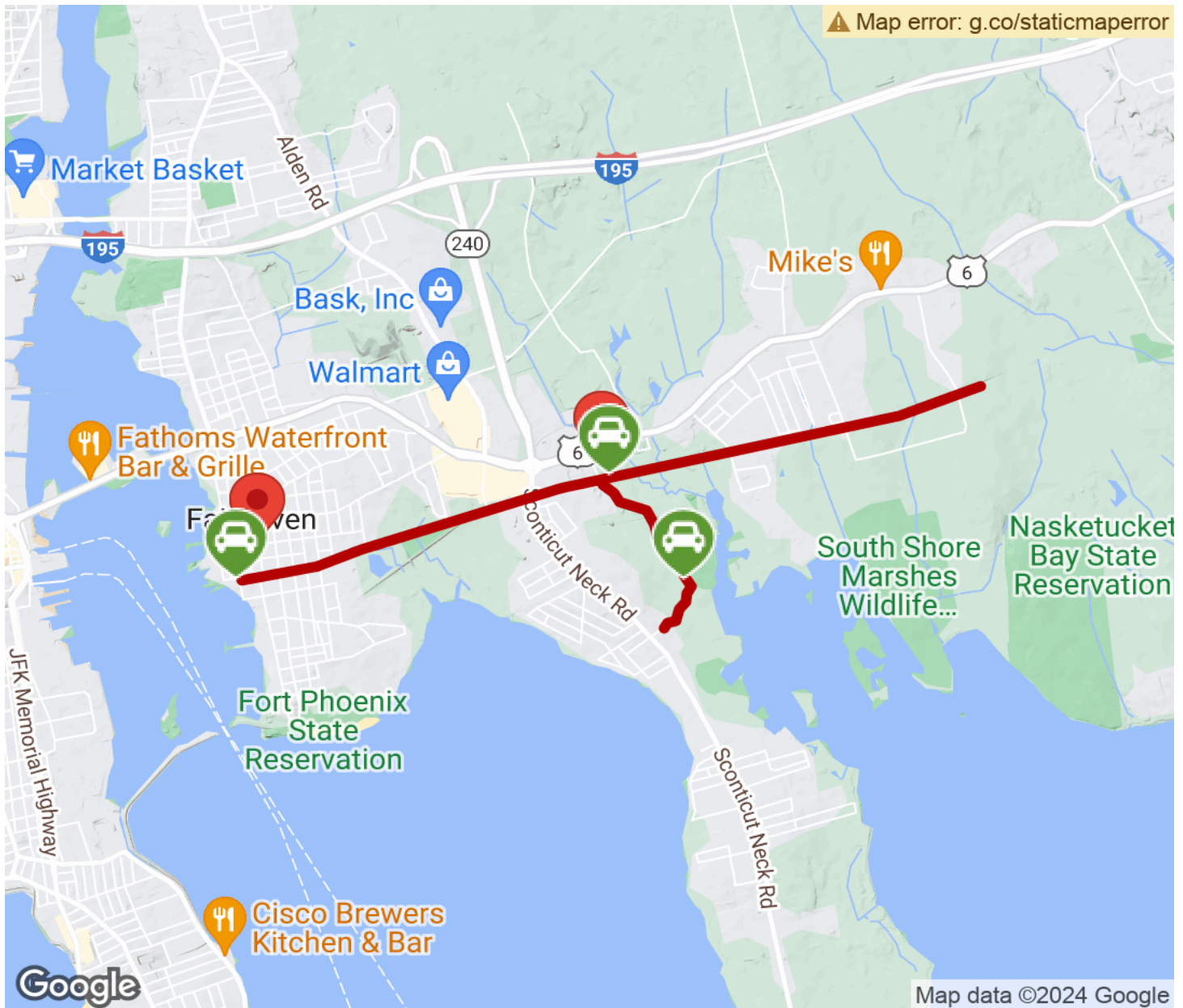Riding,Walking

Parking & Trail Access

To reach the Fairhaven trailhead from I-195, take Exit 18 toward MA 240 toward Fairhaven. Head south 1.1 miles and turn right onto US 6/Huttleston Ave. Go 0.3 mile and turn left onto Washington St. Go 1.0 mile and turn left onto Main St. Go 0.2 mile and turn left onto South St. for on-street parking, or right into the city parking lot at the ferry maintenance dock.

To reach the Arsene St. trailhead from I-195, take Exit 18 toward MA 240 toward Fairhaven. Head south 1.1 miles and turn left onto US 6/Huttleston Ave. Go 0.2 mile and turn right onto Arsene St. Go 0.1 mile and turn left onto an unnamed street past the Department of Public Works, which is adjacent to the trail. Take the first left into a parking lot. The eastern endpoint is 1.6 miles east, and the western endpoint is 1.9 miles west. There is no parking at the eastern endpoint.

Phoenix Bike Trail

Massachusetts

⚠ Map error: g.co/staticmaperror

Market Basket

Alden Rd

I-195

240

Mike's

6

Bask, Inc

Walmart

Fathoms Waterfront Bar & Grille

Fairhaven

6

Conticut Neck Rd

South Shore Marshes Wildlife...

Nasketucket Bay State Reservation

JFK Memorial Highway

Fort Phoenix State Reservation

Sconticut Neck Rd

Cisco Brewers Kitchen & Bar

Google

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| 🚩 Trailhead | 🚻 Restroom | 🚗 Parking | 💧 Water Fountain | 🚇 Tunnel |