



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Dunn-Erwin
Rail-Trail**
North Carolina



Dunn-Erwin Rail-Trail

North Carolina

Following the route of a historic rail line that once serviced a coal plant and denim textile mills in Erwin, the Dunn-Erwin Rail Trail



Following the route of a historic rail line that once serviced a coal plant and denim textile mills in Erwin, the Dunn-Erwin Rail Trail passes through wooded terrain interspersed with open farmland and cotton fields. While the original rail trail runs for about 5 miles, an extension along a non-rail-trail section to the Cape Fear River Trail Park (not to be confused with the similarly named trail in Fayetteville) brings the total length to 7 miles.

Surfaced in crushed stone, the Dunn-Erwin Rail Trail is ADA-accessible. Its comfortable, flat surface makes for an easy and relaxing experience. Although the trail intersects with streets in multiple locations, the crossings are well-marked. Trail users will find a series of signs that feature maps and information about points of historical interest.

About the Route

Beginning just north of downtown Dunn, the rail trail heads northwest, passing the Dunn Dog Park in 1.1 miles before heading into the flat farmland that makes up the countryside of Harnett County. The trail crosses the Black River in 0.7 miles, before reaching the approximate halfway point, where you'll encounter an abrupt left turn that you'll take to head southwest toward Erwin.

The flat, open terrain continues for 1.2 miles until the trail passes under US 421 and enters Erwin. There, trail users will find a small-town setting and the trail is occasionally lined with trees. Streetside parking is available near the greenway in Erwin. After the rail-trail portion ends, at the intersection of East H Street and 13th Street, the route continues for 2.2 miles to the south/southwest, first on a well-marked concrete pathway that meanders through downtown Erwin, quiet neighborhoods, and industrial areas, and then transitioning to a crushed-stone trail along remote forestland. The trail reaches its western trailhead with restrooms and parking at Cape Fear River Trail Park on the Cape Fear River. The park also offers nature trails, scenic overlooks, canoe access, and a picnic shelter.

The rail trail is part of the East Coast Greenway, a 3,000-mile trail network that runs from Maine to Florida, connecting 15 states and 450 cities and towns along the way.

Trail History

The Dunn-Erwin Rail Trail connects the two central North Carolina towns of Dunn and Erwin, which lie between the metropolitan areas of Fayetteville and Raleigh. The Aberdeen and Rockfish rail line (previously Durham & Southern Railway) once served the towns of Dunn, known for cotton production, and Erwin, known for cotton and denim textile mills. The disused rail line opened as a rail trail in the early 2000s.



Dunn-Erwin Rail-Trail

North Carolina

States: North Carolina

Counties: Harnett

Length: 7miles

Trail end points: N McKay Ave. (Dunn) to Cape Fear River Trail Park, 1002 S 13th St (Erwin)

Trail surfaces: Concrete, Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible

Parking & Trail Access

The Dunn-Erwin Rail Trail runs between N McKay Ave., (Dunn) and Cape Fear River Trail Park, 1002 S 13th St (Erwin), with parking available at both ends.

Parking is also available at:

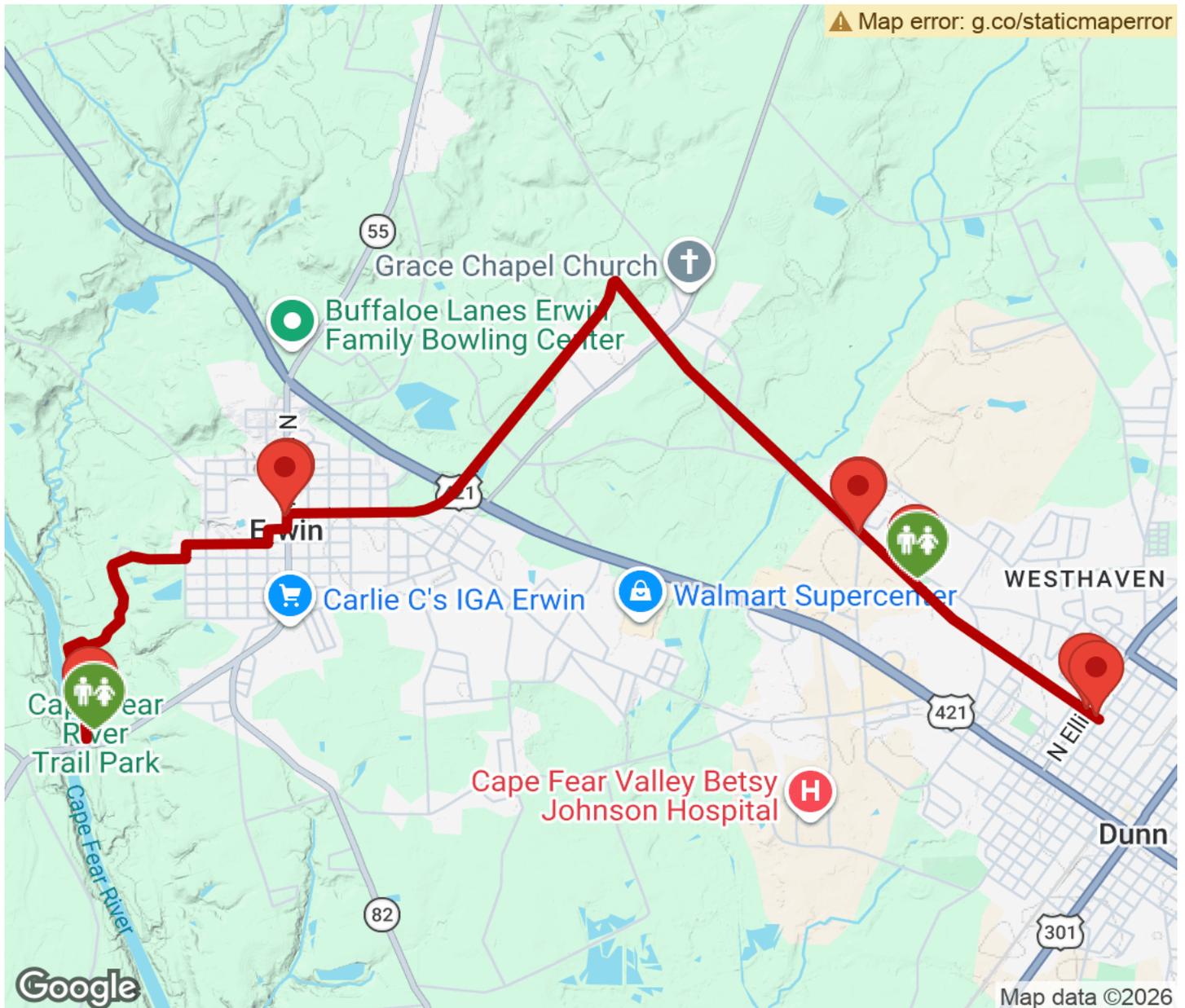
- Dunn Dog Park, 701 N Ashe Ave (Dunn)

See [TrailLink Map](#) for more detailed directions and all parking options.



Dunn-Erwin Rail-Trail

North Carolina



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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