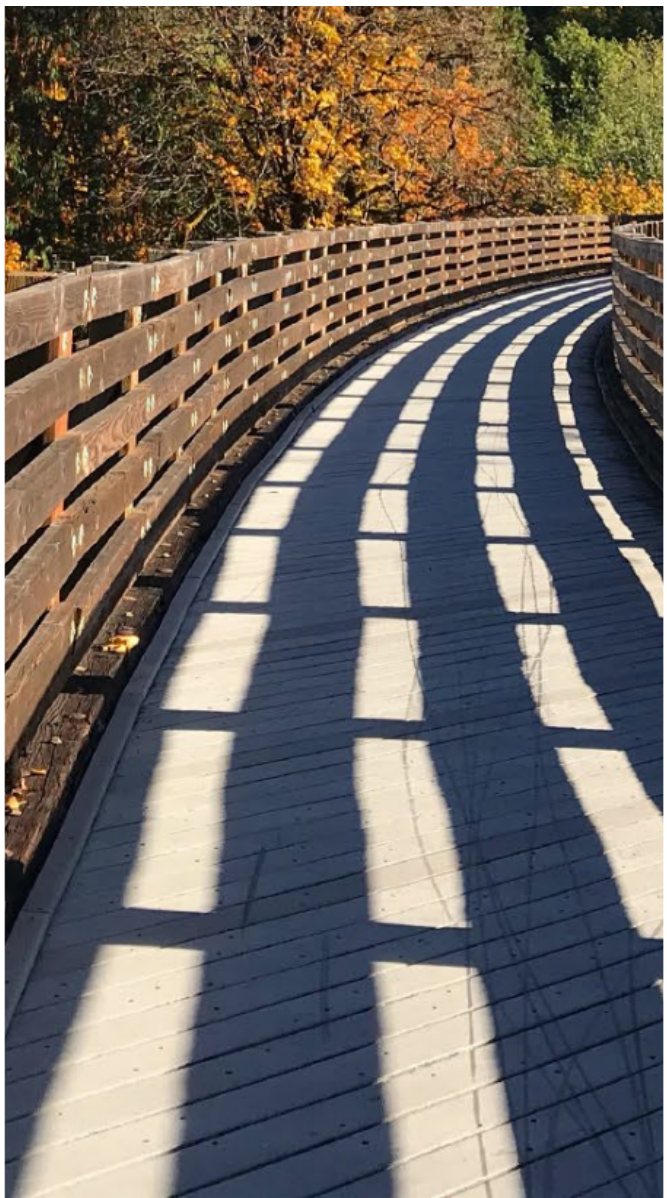
TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

2026

TrailLink Unlimited

Guides



Homestead Trail (NE)

Nebraska

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The Homestead Trail follows the route of a rail corridor put up for abandonment by Union Pacific in 1999. Construction began on the trail in 2007 and was completed in the summer of 2012 by a partnership of the Nebraska Trails Foundation, Lower Platte South Natural Resources District and the City of Beatrice.

Running 40 miles from Lincoln in the north to Beatrice in the south, the limestone-surfaced Homestead Trail offers excellent connectivity for the residents of this part of Nebraska. In the north, the Homestead Trail links with the Jamaica North Trail, which travels northward deeper into the heart of Lincoln. Adventurous travelers can trek farther north from the Jamaica North Trail to Haymarket Park—Lincoln's baseball stadium—via the Salt Creek Levee Trail.

Continuing south from Lincoln, the Homestead Trail winds through acres of farmland and comes close to the tiny villages of Roca and Princeton. The trail then runs through the city of Cortland, where limited amenities await weary bikers and walkers. The 9 mile section from Cortland to Pickrell, which was completed in 2012, winds through some greener scenery of relatively dense tree cover and crosses over 18 restored railroad trestles. In Pickrell, hungry travelers can find a bite to eat.

The Homestead Trail currently ends in downtown Beatrice, the largest city and county seat of Gage County. The Gage County Historical Society and Museum is located at the Beatrice trailhead in the restored Burlington Railroad Depot Passenger Station originally built in 1906. Be sure to check out the history of the rail corridor you just traveled upon! The beautiful Gage County Courthouse, which opened in 1892, is just a few blocks from the end of the Homestead Trail as well. The Homestead National Monument, for which the trail is named, is another short ride along State Route 4 from Beatrice, although an off-road connection is planned for the future. The monument commemorates the impacts of the Homestead Act on the United States and offers numerous exhibits for those not yet tired from their journey.

The Chief Standing Bear Trail extends along the same former rail corridor. Construction is ongoing at the northern end of the trail in Beatrice through 2016. The Blue River Rail Trail occupies the southern end of this corridor from the state line to Marysville, Kansas. This allows trail users to travel uninterrupted from downtown Lincoln, Nebraska, to Marysville, Kansas, along an impressive network of trails.

Homestead Trail (NE)

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States: Nebraska
Counties: Gage,Lancaster
Length: 40miles
Trail end points: Jamaica North Trail at Saltillo Rd (Lincoln) to 2nd St & Court St (Beatrice)
Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone
Trail category: Rail-Trail
Trail activities: Bike,Walking,Wheelchair Accessible

Parking & Trail Access

Parking for the Homestead Trail is available where it meets the Jamaica North Trail at Saltillo Road in Lincoln. Street parking can also be found in Cortland, while a dedicated parking lot is located off of West Pickrell Road in Pickrell. Parking is most abundant at the Beatrice trailhead at the intersection of Court Street and 2nd Street.

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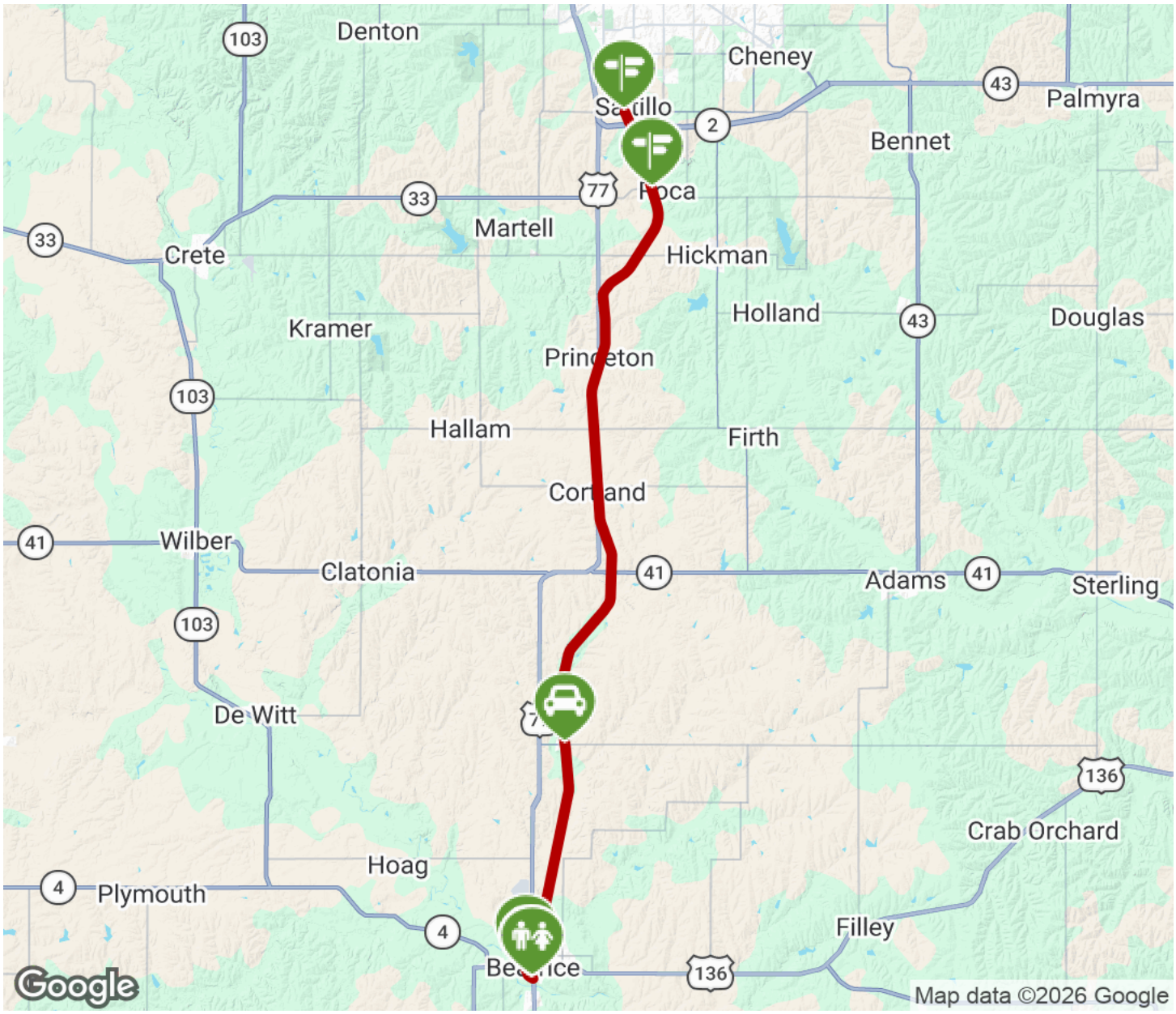

Trailhead Restroom Parking Water Fountain Tunnel

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