



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



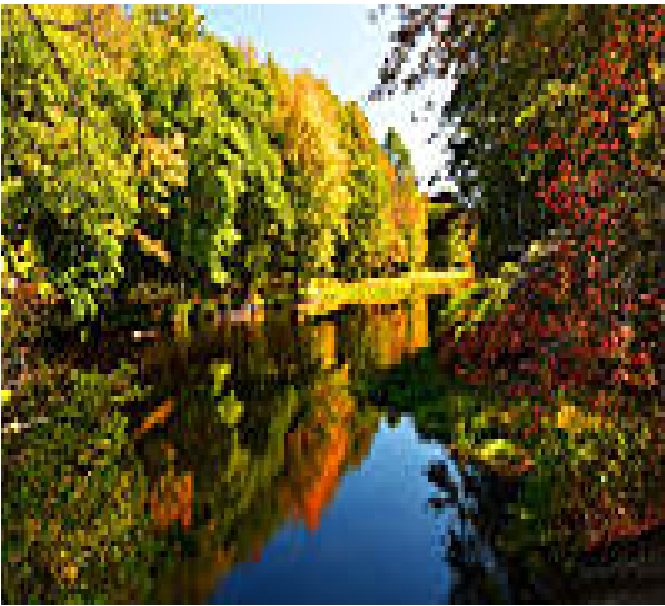
**Common
Pathway**
New Hampshire



Common Pathway

New Hampshire

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The Common Pathway travels 5.5 miles from the outskirts of Peterborough south to downtown's Noone Falls area, paralleling US 202 and the Contoocook River for most of its journey. The small town of Peterborough boasts the Peterborough Town Library, the oldest tax-supported public library in the United States. Founded in 1833 by Reverend Abiel Abbot, the library collection has grown from 100 to more than 43,000 books, and the space supports research and hosts a variety of educational programs and events.

The pathway offers easy, mostly level terrain, with crushed stone making up the very northern portion of trail and a paved portion spanning from Southfield Lane to the trail's southern endpoint. Note that there are a few small, narrow, or poorly maintained sections, so hybrid

bikes are recommended.

Beginning at the northern trailhead on Scott Mitchell Road, you'll find a small parking lot adjacent to the trailhead, and additional parking just south where US 202 intersects Scott Mitchell Road. This trailhead also serves the [Old Railroad Trail](#), which seamlessly connects to the northern endpoint of the Common Pathway and heads 2.7 miles into Hancock.

Heading south, the trail alternates between quiet on-road and wooded off-road segments. Bike route signs help with wayfinding, although they are not prevalent, so proceed carefully. About 2.5 miles along the trail from Scott Mitchell Road, you'll pass another parking area accessible from Summer Street.

The trail runs south to and beyond the small town of Peterborough, which is a hot spot for home-based entrepreneurs and telecommuters, and a popular tourist spot for those seeking outdoor pursuits such as fishing. Access to downtown Peterborough is provided through mostly residential, low-traffic streets; here, you'll find a quaint main street with restaurants, shops, preserved historical buildings (to reach the Peterborough Town Library on Concord Street head east on Main Street for one block), and a restored train depot that now hosts shops and a café.

South of downtown Peterborough, the route is not well signed and may be difficult to navigate for those not familiar with the trail. You'll continue south on US 202 to the intersection with SR 101, turn left, and loop around a gas station to the SR 101 underpass by the Contoocook River. You'll then head around the east side of the Peterborough Shopping Plaza and then west to a side-path portion of the trail (composed of asphalt that is not regularly maintained), which travels on the left side of busy US 202 S (across the highway is another strip mall) to the trail's end just before Cabana Drive.



Common Pathway

New Hampshire

States: New Hampshire

Counties: Hillsborough

Length: 5.5miles

Trail end points: Old Railroad Trail just south of the W. Ridge Dr. & Scott Mitchell Road to US 202 and Cabana Dr. (Peterborough)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline

Skating, Fishing, Wheelchair

Accessible, Walking, Cross Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

To reach the northern trailhead near the Peterborough Recycling Center from the intersection of SR 101/Wilton Road and NH 123, head north on Granite St./US 202, and go 4.1 miles (the road becomes Pine St., then US 202 E/Concord St., then Hancock Road). Turn right onto Scott Mitchell Road, go 0.2 mile, and turn right into the trailhead parking lot (immediately after Sanitation Lane).

To reach the alternate northern trailhead and the Old Railroad Trail, follow the directions above, but turn left instead of right at Scott Mitchell Road. Look for the parking lot immediately on your left. The northern endpoint is located about 0.2 mile north along the trail.

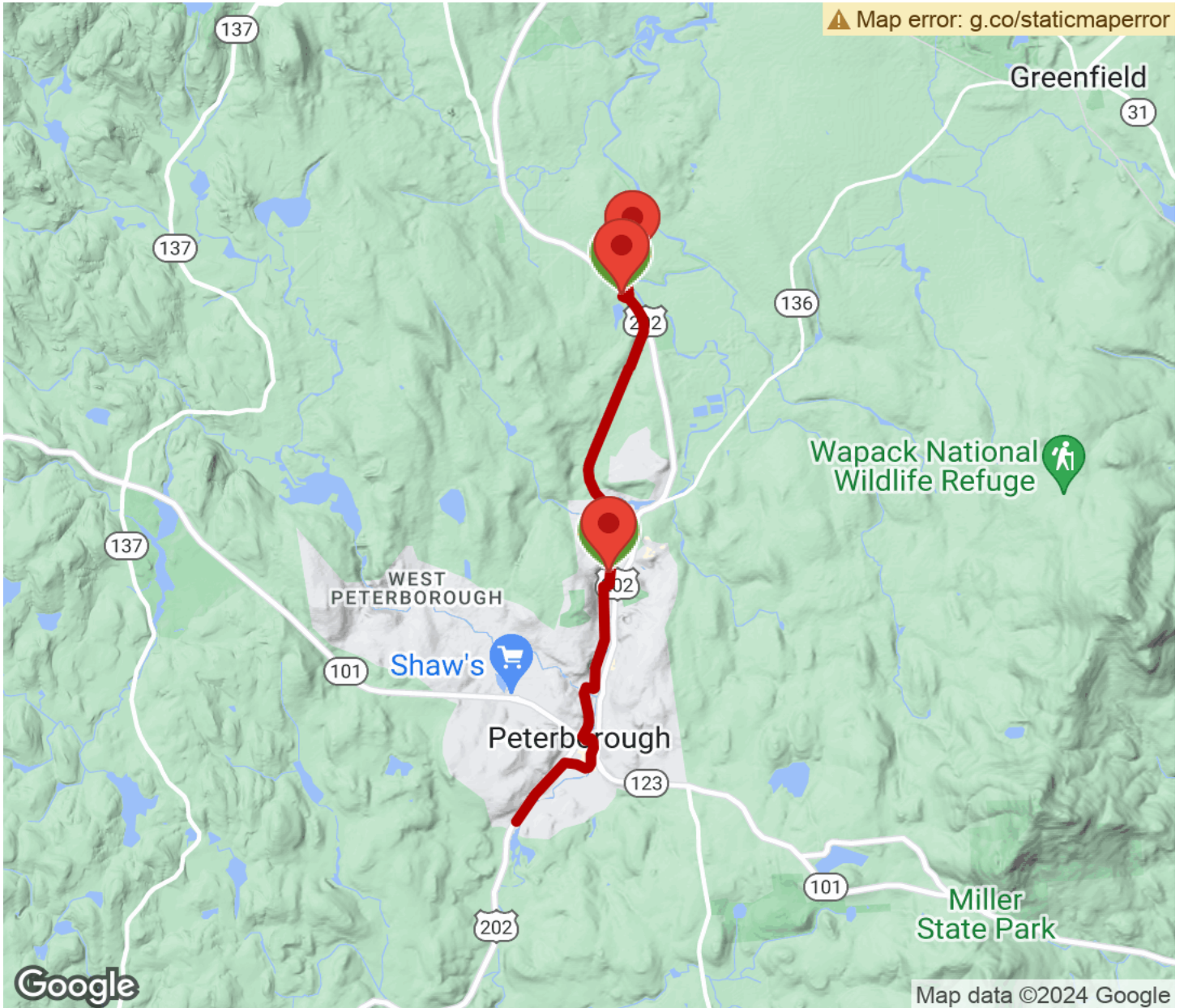
To reach the trailhead on Summer St., from the intersection of NH 101/Wilton Road and SR 123, head north on Granite St./US 202, and go 0.6 mile (the road becomes Pine St.). Turn left onto Main St., and then immediately turn right onto Summer St. Go 0.9 mile, and turn right into the small trailhead parking lot.

There is no parking at the southern endpoint.



Common Pathway

New Hampshire



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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