



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides   



**John Pat
Dorrian Trail
*Iowa***



John Pat Dorrian Trail

Iowa

The John Pat Dorrian Trail, formerly known as the East River Trail, runs for nearly 3.5 miles from Pete Crivaro Park in south Des Moines to Birdland Park and Marina just north of downtown. At this northern endpoint, the trail seamlessly connects with the [Neal Smith Trail](#), offering an additional 26 miles for a trail run or ride. Unlike the more secluded Neal Smith Trail, which travels through forests, hugs Saylorville Lake and ends at Big Creek Lake's beach, the John Pat Dorrian Trail traverses through the heart of urban Des Moines.



Iowa Cubs—is just a short hop over the river on the Scott Avenue or Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway bridges. Another way to cross the river is via the Union Railroad Bridge just south of Court Avenue at the trail's midpoint, which was converted to pedestrian use in 2006 as part of Des Moines' Principal Riverwalk. To access Wells Fargo Arena, consider taking the Center Street Bridge, an architecturally stunning pedestrian bridge featuring separate paths for bikers and walkers that meet in the middle at a glass-bottomed platform.

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Along the way, you'll pass many of Des Moines cultural attractions, including the Des Moines Botanical Center, Simon Estes Ampitheater and City Hall. Best of all, you'll never stray farther than a few feet from the Des Moines River. Principal Park—home to Minor League Baseball's



John Pat Dorrian Trail

Iowa

States: Iowa

Counties: Polk

Length: 3.4 miles

Trail end points: Birdland Marina at Birdland Park Dr. and Saylorville Rd. to Pete Crivaro Park at E. Railroad Ave. and SE 10th St.

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Greenway/Non-RT

Trail activities: Bike, Inline

Skating, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible

Parking & Trail Access

Because the John Pat Dorrian Trail is an urban pathway, there are no dedicated parking lots. However, the various Des Moines administrative buildings have large parking lots on Robert D. Ray Drive and E. Grand Avenue. Pete Crivaro Park at the trail's southern endpoint has a parking lot at the intersection of SE 11th Street and E. Railroad Avenue. In the north, consider parking at the Des Moines Botanical Center or Birdland Park and Marina located just off Saylor Road.



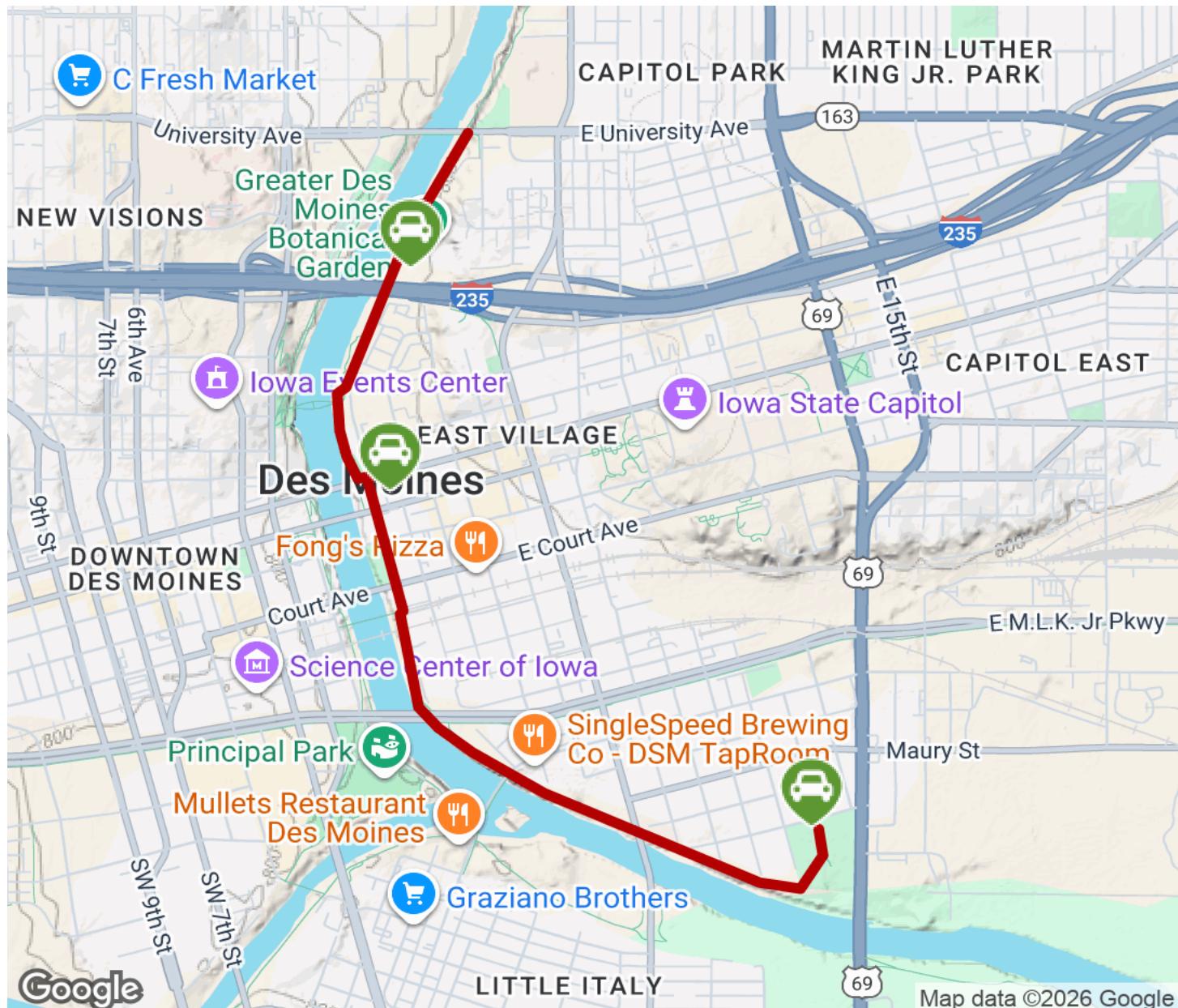
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John Pat Dorrian Trail

Iowa



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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