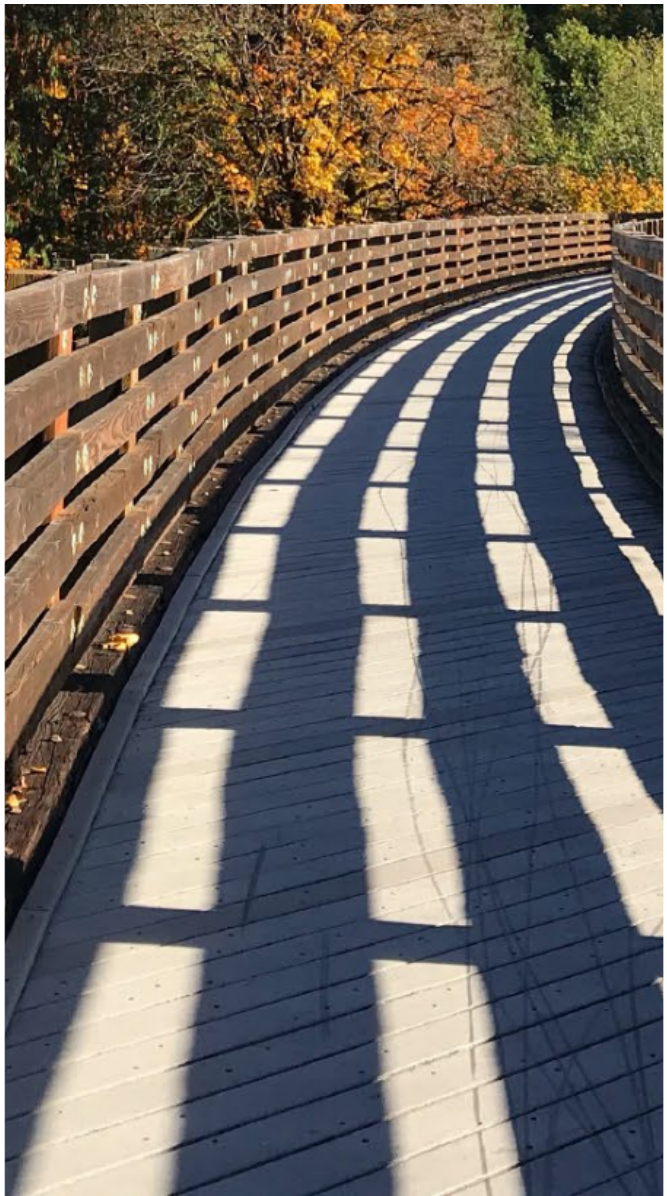
TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

2026

TrailLink Unlimited Guides



Big Four Bridge

Indiana, Kentucky

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The Big Four Bridge links Louisville, Kentucky, and Jeffersonville, Indiana, over the majestic Ohio River, once described by Thomas Jefferson as "the most beautiful river on Earth." The bridge's unusual name comes from the informal name of the railroad that originally ran trains over the line: the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railway once connected these 'big four' cities via an extensive rail network throughout the Midwest.

The bridge opened to rail traffic in 1895, although an expanded bridge using the same piers replaced it in 1929. The Big Four Bridge was abandoned by Penn Central, who had acquired the Big Four Railroad through a series of mergers, in 1969. Miraculously, the resolute bridge survived as a 'Bridge to Nowhere' for more than 4 decades, even withstanding 4 fires. In 2009, Louisville and Jeffersonville committed to restoring the bridge for bicycle and pedestrian use, and it finally opened in 2013.

The bridge has seen heavy use since its opening. With its 24/7 availability, lighted handrails and scenic views of the river and downtown Louisville, the bridge has become a popular (and romantic) spot in Louisville. New businesses are opening and existing businesses are quickly adapting to take advantage of the massive increase in foot traffic on both sides of the river.

Motorized vehicles, skateboards, in-line skates and pets (excepting service animals) are prohibited on the bridge. On the Kentucky side, the bridge directly meets the Louisville Riverwalk, allowing trail users to continue along the Ohio River on an off-road route to downtown.

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States: Indiana, Kentucky
Counties: Clark,Jefferson
Length: 0.5miles
Trail end points: Louisville Riverwalk at River Rd. (Louisville, KY) to Pearl St. and W. Chestnut St. (Jeffersonville, IN)
Trail surfaces: Concrete
Trail category: Rail-Trail
Trail activities: Bike,Walking,Wheelchair Accessible

Parking & Trail Access

Parking for the Big Four Bridge is available off River Road in Louisville's Waterfront Park at the base of the bridge.

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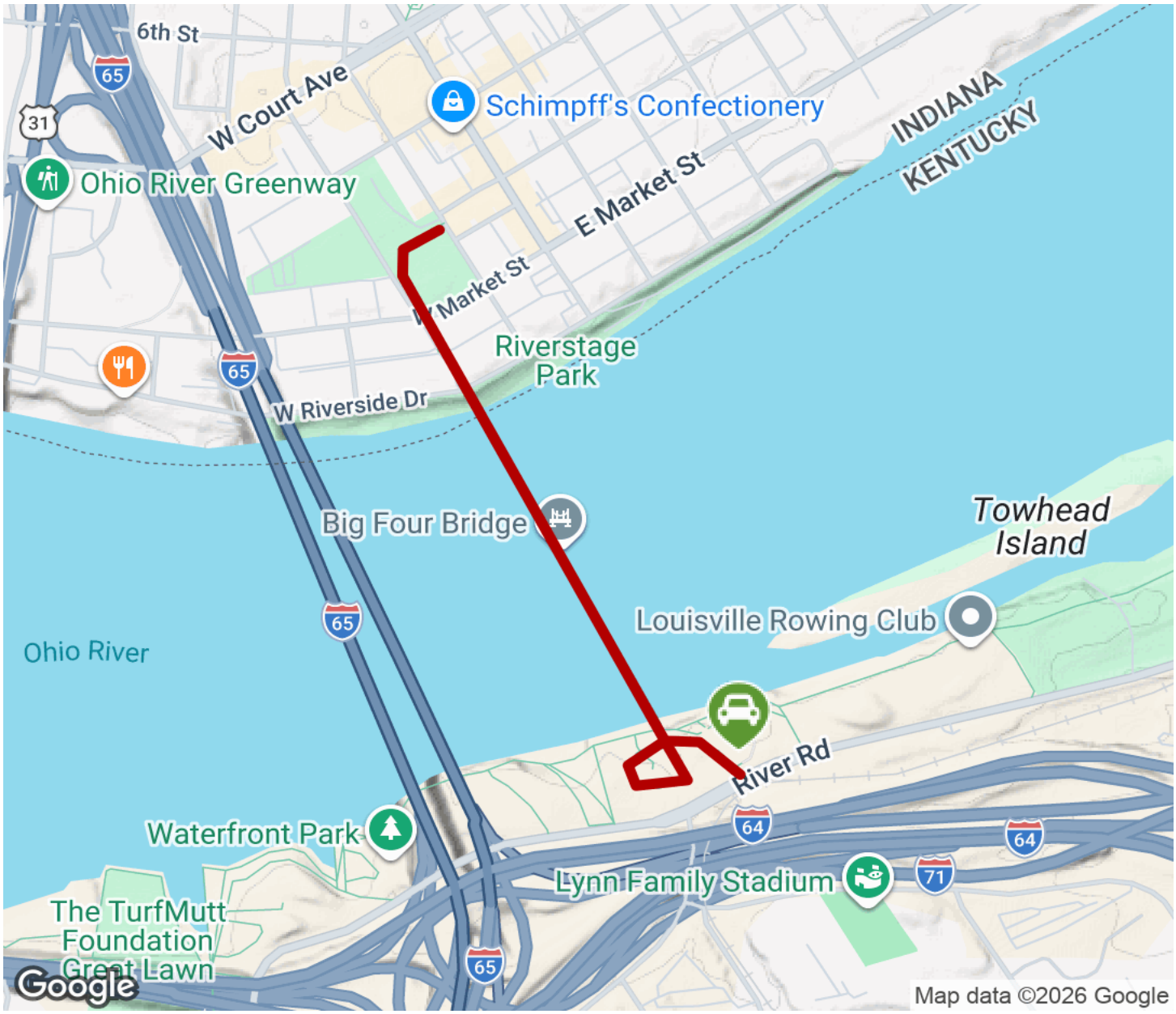

Trailhead Restroom Parking Water Fountain Tunnel

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TrailLink.com