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TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



# Charles River Bike Path

*Massachusetts*



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The Charles River Bike Path, also referred to as the Charles River Greenway, offers a paved, 23-mile route from Boston to its western suburbs.

## About the Route

A large section of the trail, beginning on its eastern end and extending 16 miles, is named after Dr. Paul Dudley White, a prominent cardiologist and proponent of preventative medicine such as exercise. The Dr. Paul Dudley White Bike Path hugs each side of the Charles River through Boston, Cambridge, and Watertown.

In many sections of the route, there are multiple parallel trail options for those who'd prefer an unpaved surface or would like to stay further from the road activity. A

number of architecturally interesting bridges will greet trail users as they enter Cambridge from Boston, allowing trail users to create shorter routes on both sides of the river as opposed to the larger loop. While busy roads parallel the trail on both sides of the river, most of the route has trees and green space along the way. Along the way, trail users may enjoy watching boats skim by and even try their hand at a variety of water sports that are available to the public at numerous locations.

Starting at the famed Museum of Science in Boston and heading into Cambridge, the Charles River will be on the left for the first half of the loop. In 2 miles, the trail passes the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's campus on the right, followed by Harvard University in 2.6 miles. Continuing another 3.8 miles into Watertown, the trail passes the Watertown Yacht Club to the left as it curves around the river, followed by the Pat and Gabriel Farren Playground on the right, just before Irving Street.

Trail users who would like to continue their journey may continue on the Charles River Bike Path beyond Watertown west to Waltham. This option provides the opportunity to visit Waltham's Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation.

Otherwise, cross the Galen Street Bridge to begin the other side of the loop back to Boston. There are several athletic facilities and the Northeastern University Boathouse, featuring impressive modern architecture as the trail heads east. Keep an eye out for rowers carrying their boats across the trail. In 2.9 miles from the Galen Street Bridge, the trail reaches the Charles River Reservation. This 20-mile stretch provides a quiet and natural experience with a dock set in the water, allowing trail users to enjoy an intimate view of the river as the trail curves around Soldiers Field Road, passing Harvard Stadium and Soldiers Field Park Children's Center on the right.



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**States:** Massachusetts

**Counties:** Middlesex, Suffolk

Length: 23.4 miles

**Trail end points:** Prospect St. (Waltham) to  
Charles River Dam Rd. Bridge (Boston)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt

**Trail category:** Greenway/Non-RT

**Trail activities:** Bike, Fishing, Inline  
Skating, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible, Cross  
Country Skiing

## Parking & Trail Access

The Charles River Bike Path runs between Prospect St. (Waltham) and Charles River Dam Rd. Bridge (Boston).

Parking is available at:

- McKenna Playground, 136 Elm St. (Waltham)
- Forte Park, 235 California St. (Newton)
- Christian Park, 1075 Soldiers Field Rd (Boston)

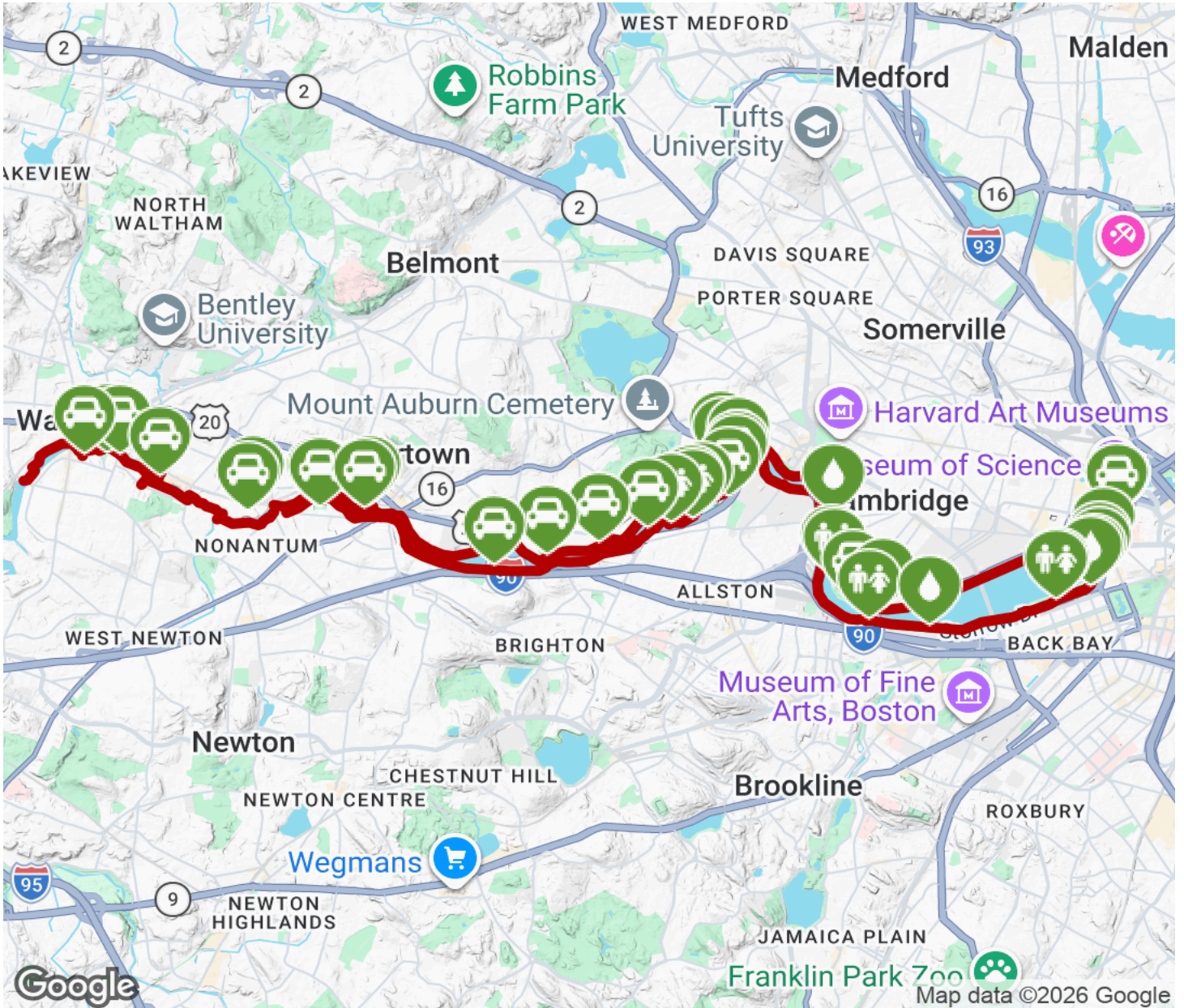
Additionally, Boston has a robust public transit system. See more at Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority for more information.

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



# Charles River Bike Path

Massachusetts



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



**TrailLink**  
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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