TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

2024

TrailLink Unlimited ∞

Guides

Dark Island Trail
Nebraska

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Traversing just over 8 miles in central Nebraska, the Dark Island Trail runs from the small town of Central City to the even smaller

Close to Central City, the trail runs through the middle of the Turtle Beach neighborhood and immediately adjacent to the lake which the community is built around. From Turtle Beach to Marquette, the Dark Island Trail runs uninterrupted for miles through Nebraska's famous verdant farmland.

Traversing just over 8 miles in central Nebraska, the Dark Island Trail runs from the small town of Central City to the even smaller village of Marquette. For those experiencing the trail by bike, wider tires are recommended.

The rail-trail opened in 2011, capping off nearly ten years of work by the Nebraska Trail Committee and Nebraska Trails Foundation on converting the former railroad corridor into a recreational trail. The centerpiece of the trail is undoubtedly its 1,072-foot long bridge, which was originally built in the 1880s by the Republican Valley Railroad. It spans the Platte River south of Center City and has been fully converted to pedestrian use with improved decking, handrails, and several bump-outs for enjoyment of the beautiful view.

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States: Nebraska

Counties: Hamilton,Merrick

Length: 8.4miles

Trail end points: US 30 between 13th and 14th Avenues (Central City) to Marquis Avenue between Railroad and Petersen Streets (Marquette)

Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Mountain Biking,Walking,Cross Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

State Route 14 runs through Central City and comes close to Marquette. Take the road to either endpoint and park on city streets. There are signs directing visitors to the Dark Island Trail in Central City and in Marquette. As always, be mindful of parking restrictions and respectful of the property of the towns' residents.

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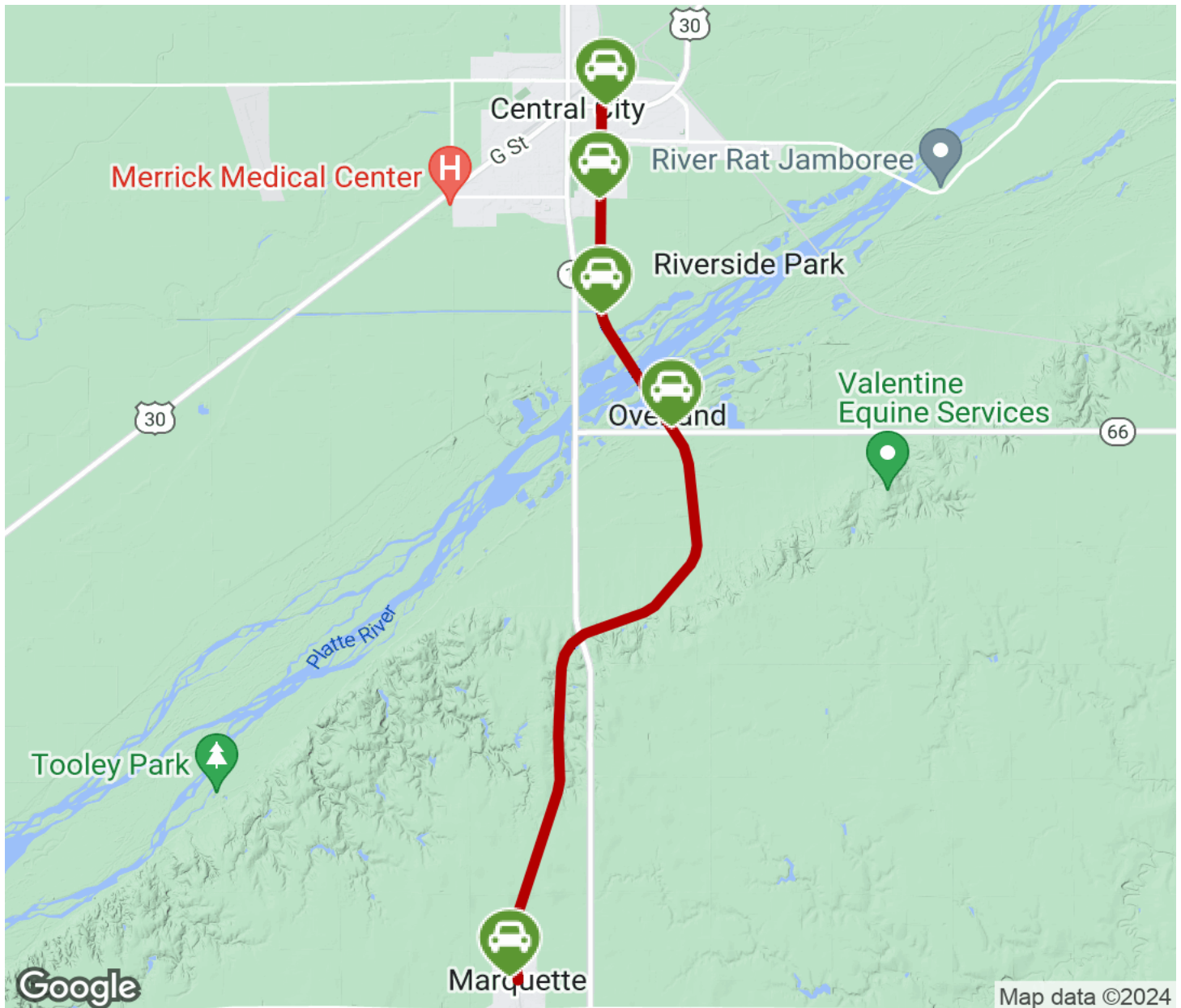
Legend:
- Trailhead
- Restroom
- Parking
- Water Fountain
- Tunnel