

Farmington Canal Heritage Trail

The Farmington Canal trail is a unique regional resource that reflects the region's industrial past. The 83-mile Farmington Canal opened in 1828 to provide a waterway to provide transport for goods and people from New Haven, CT to Northampton, MA in competition with the Connecticut River. Modeled after the Erie Canal, the waterway was expensive to construct and operate and in 1848, was replaced by a railroad which operated until the 1982. Some of the remaining locks and piers of the canal are still visible today.

In 1987 when the railroad was about to be abandoned to private property owners, the towns of Cheshire and Hamden petitioned to allow the right-of-way to be converted as a recreational trail.

The first six miles of the multi-use trail were opened in 1996. As the original canal and rail bed were segregated from streets and roadways, the canal can be used with minimal at-grade crossings or interruptions. Today, you can enjoy walking, jogging, cycling or rollerblading along approximately eight miles of this scenic paved trail in Hamden and continue north to Cheshire or south to New Haven. The trail connects to other trail systems such as Brooksville Park, Sleeping Giant and the Mill River.

New Haven has paved and completed some (0.5 miles) of the trail, but most of the two mile trail can still be hiked as dirt surface. A portion of the trail traverses part of the Yale University campus adjacent the Malone Engineering Center recently completed by New Haven based architect Cesar Pelli. Completion of the final Hamden and New Haven portions of the Farmington Canal is anticipated by the summer of 2007. When complete, the Farmington Canal will connect to New Haven's Vision Trail that leads to Long Wharf and the New Haven Harbor.



Photo by Emmeline Alaconis, SCRCOG

Trail Description:

Easy Walk

The Farmington Canal Heritage Trail is a paved walkway. There is wheelchair access and bikes, rollerblades and other wheeled activities are allowed.

Total trails distance is approx. 8.92 miles

Directions and Parking:

The Hamden portion of the Canal can be reached via Dixwell/Whitney Avenue (Route 10). Hamden parking facilities are located at Sherman Avenue, Todd Street and at Brooksville Park on Brooksville Avenue all off Route 10. In New Haven, on-street metered parking near the Canal near Prospect Place is recommended.

Permitted/Prohibited Activities:

This paved multi-use trail is for nonmotorized activities such as walking, jogging, biking, roller-blading, and wheel chair and stroller access. Dogs are allowed on leash. Please bag and pick up all dog waste.



Photo by Town of Hamden

Total Trails Length: *Approx. 8.92 miles*



For more information about this location, contact:

Town of Hamden
Parks and Recreation Department
(203) 287-2579



Farmington Canal Heritage Trail

