

WALKING CITY TRAIL

The Walking City Trail: Section 1

Harvest River Bridge to Adams Park

Hiking distance: 7.6 miles

Elevation gain: 322 feet

- Section 1 of the Walking City Trail begins at the **Harvest River Bridge**, which is reachable from **Capen Street station** on the MBTA's high speed trolley line between Ashmont and Mattapan. You can also take the bus to the vicinity of **Mattapan station** and walk to Capen Street station via Blue Hills Avenue and Eliot Street. (a 0.8 mile walk from Mattapan station.)
- From the Capen Street station platform, begin to walk northwest along Capen Street and almost immediately after the trolley tracks, make a right turn onto an unnamed side road. Look for a yellow railroad crossing sign on a telephone pole by the entrance to this side road.
- Walk toward a gray gate with yellow and black stripes at the end of the road and continue past the gate into the Neponset River Reservation woods on a dirt path.
- Follow the dirt path through the woods briefly until it emerges from the trees and arrives at the paved multi-use path of the **Neponset River Greenway**. Turn left onto the Greenway and arrive at Harvest River Bridge. **You've reached the official starting point of the Walking City Trail.**
- Cross the Harvest River Bridge (officially crossing from Milton into the City of Boston!) and take a left turn onto the paved greenway path on the other side.
- Follow the paved greenway path along the Neponset River and keep left as the path splits in three different places.

- Climb a long, winding bridge that crosses the river and trolley tracks below. As you reach the top of the bridge, keep left as a ramp down to Mattapan station branches off to the right. Continue over the bridge, down into the woods on the other side of the Neponset River.
- As the paved greenway path ends at Mattapan Station, there will be a building with two red columns on your left and a gray archway with the MBTA logo on your right. Continue straight ahead between the two structures to cross River Street twice.
- Continue across Blue Hills Avenue. Then cross Cummins Highway. Immediately after crossing Cummins, turn left and cross River Street one more time. (This can be frustratingly slow, but it's a testament to what happens when pedestrian mobility isn't prioritized.) Also note that this crossroads offers access to restaurants and shops which may have bathrooms you can use.
- Briefly walk southwest along River Street with the river on your left. Veer left onto Edgewater Drive and continue walking alongside the river, past the City Natives Community Garden.
- After passing a playground, look for **an opening in the 4 foot tall stone wall** on your left and pass through this opening. You have now entered the **Edgewater Greenway**, which is currently being planned for development a new community trail.
- Follow a thin and lightly-used dirt path through the riverside woodlands. You'll have to make your way over a couple of downed trees in places. Combined with the thick vegetation, this can make the Edgewater Greenway feel like a jungle!
- As another length of stone wall appears on your right and the dirt path becomes narrower, you'll reach the end of the path. Here, the soil has been packed into sort of a "step" that makes it fairly easy to climb back over the stone wall onto Edgewater Drive. Climb over the wall to reach the intersection of Edgewater and Monponset Street. (If you would like to avoid the wall climb, stay on Edgewater Drive after passing the playground and follow it to Monponset Street.)
- Continue straight up Monponset Street, cross River Street once again, and turn right onto River Street.

- Turn left onto Caton Street and then make another right onto Hollingsworth Street.
- At a four-way intersection with Rector Road on your right, make a left turn onto a concrete path that passes beneath a set of railroad tracks via wooden stairs. When you emerge from the underpass, continue ahead briefly and then take your first left onto Ralston Road.
- Continue on Ralston Road and turn right onto Ruskindale Road.
- Follow Ruskindale Road to Wood Avenue, cross Wood Avenue, and then turn left onto Farrar Avenue. As you crest a hillside, you'll see the woods of Stony Brook Reservation ahead.
- As the street ends at a T-intersection, take a gander to your right toward the nearby forest. This is **Crane Ledge Woods**, which is unfortunately private property. A trail from the road to the overlook of Crane Ledge does exist. One day, the Walking City Trail could pass through Crane Ledge Woods with the land owner's permission. Alas, that day is not here yet.
- Turn left at the T-intersection, make a right turn onto Tacoma Street, and then turn right again onto Bradlee Street. As you continue along Bradlee Street and pass Bradlee Court and Crane Street, look to your right for some impressive views of the cliff faces of Crane Ledge Woods.
- Turn left onto Collins Street and continue to its intersection with Hyde Park Avenue.
- Cross Hyde Park Avenue and continue onto Metropolitan Avenue, passing a liquor store, an auto shop, and a utility truck depot before reaching a pedestrian overpass that crosses another set of train tracks.
- Climb the pedestrian overpass to bypass the tracks and as you reach the bottom of the ramp on the other side, make a left onto Dale Street.
- As you approach a playground, look for an opening in the wooden fence on your left. (There's a dog leashing sign posted by this opening). Pick up a paved path, keep left as the path splits in front of the playground, and follow the paved path past a few picnic tables to reach a dirt path on your left. This is the northern entrance to **Sherrin Woods**.

- Follow a rocky path into Sherrin Woods. (Watch out for broken glass in a couple places.) As the trail splits, make a left turn. Keep left as you pass two gnarlier-looking side paths on your right, and head deeper into the green woods.
- Continue straight as the path hits a four-way intersection and becomes much smoother. As you emerge from the woods and approach a sunny clearing, you'll see a fenced-in patch of wetland ahead. Turn right once the path reaches the wetland.
- Walk along the path with the wetlands on your left, noting the birdhouses in the trees. (Sherrin Woods is a great venue for binocular toggling.) As the path forks, take a right turn back into the woods and follow a short path out of Sherrin Woods at the corner of Austin and Marston Streets.
- Turn left onto Marston Street and then turn right onto Gwinnett Street.
- When you reach the intersection with West Street, cross West Street and continue ahead onto Summer Street.
- Follow Summer Street to its terminus at Gordon Avenue. Take a left onto Gordon Avenue and walk to its intersection with River Street, where you'll enter **the business hub of Hyde Park**. This is another good place to stop for food, drink, or a bathroom break.
- From Gordon Avenue, turn right onto River Street and walk to its intersection with Cleveland Street. Turn right onto Cleveland Street and continue until you reach the edge of a field with a baseball field and several shade trees.
- Pass through a small opening in the wooden fence along the corner of Cleveland Road to approach the baseball diamond. Walk down a gentle grassy slope to the baseball diamond's main fence. Keeping the chainlink fence of the baseball diamond on your left, walk northwest across the grassy lawn, following the light posts. At a gap in the trees and bushes ahead, you'll find a dirt path that leads to a closed gate at the edge of the Enneking Parkway.
- Turn left as you approach the gate and walk along Enneking Parkway, on the interior side of the metal barrier. You'll pass a second baseball diamond and some bleachers on your left before arriving at a small parking area.

- Walk straight across the parking area and continue through an opening in the wooden fence on the other side of the lot. (There's a boulder right next to this opening too.) Walk straight across a small grassy plot past some trees to arrive at Smithfield Road. Cross Smithfield Road and follow a faint dirt path to the shoulder of Enneking Parkway. The immense woods of **Stony Brook Reservation** will beckon to you on the other side of the parkway.
- Across the busy parkway, you should see a small parking lot that you'll need to reach. **The lack of crosswalk and the traffic here make this road crossing the most dangerous section of The Walking City Trail.** Wait until there's a gap in the traffic and quickly cross over Enneking Parkway to reach the parking lot.
- Continue straight past a gray entry gate with "Stony Brook Reservation" emblazoned on it. Enter the woods on a paved path that quickly reaches a T-intersection. Turn left onto another paved path which is sometimes called the Stony Brook Path. Blue blazes mark the trail in places. There are also occasional metal signs along the trail which read "Healthy Trail."
- Stay on the paved path as you pass several dirt side paths on both sides.
- As you approach a "Healthy Trail" sign on your left, make a left turn onto a gravelly cutoff path that descends to **Turtle Pond**. To make sure you're making the correct turnoff, you can also look for a small white sign nailed to one of the trees to your right, which simply reads "224."
- Turn right as the path reaches a T-intersection and levels out. Follow the path through the woods with the partially-obscured waters of Turtle Pond on your left. (Technically you're not allowed to swim here, in the wake of a 2021 drowning, but that doesn't stop many visitors.)
- You'll soon reach a trail junction where you'll see another one of those white numerical signs nailed to a tree. This one reads "232." Keep left and briefly continue ahead to an opening in the trees on your left, where you can step onto a wooden dock for a banger view of Turtle Pond!
- Backtrack from the dock to the earlier junction with the "232" sign. Turn left and climb a steep hillside before turning right at a T-intersection shortly after. Upon hitting another T-intersection, turn left onto the paved Stony Brook Path/Healthy Trail that you were walking on earlier.

- Continue through the Stony Brook Reservation woodlands along the paved path, climbing at a gentle grade before the path levels out. Keep left the path hits one more T-intersection and pass through some buzzing wetlands on both sides.
- After reaching another Stony Brook Reservation gate, the paved path emerges from the woods and ends at Blue Ledge Drive. Here you'll see a gated community entrance on your right. Cross Blue Ledge Drive and on the other side, pick up a thin dirt path that ambles along the edge of the gated community to reach the parking lot for the Stony Brook Plaza shopping area.
- Walk north across the lot past a CVS, a Dunkin Donuts, and a Burger Green (bathrooms!) to reach Washington Street and turn to your right for **a lovely view of Downtown Boston**, where you'll eventually be hiking.
- Turn right onto Washington Street and enjoy a long descent toward that Boston vista until you reach the shops of **Roslindale Village**.
- When you reach the intersection of Washington Street and Cummins Highway (the latter will be on your right) take a left and cross Washington Street to enter **Adams Park**. Congratulations. **You just completed Section 1 of the Walking City Trail!** Time to eat something big and gooey. After all, you've still got the other three trail sections to go...

TRANSIT, TOILETS, AND TREATS

MBTA PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE SERVICE POINTS

Bus service is available at several locations on Section 1 but these points offer the most options.

- Capen Street and Mattapan (Section 1 trailhead): Ashmont-Mattapan [trolley](#). Bus lines [24](#), [28](#), [29](#), [30](#), [31](#), [33](#), [245](#).
- Hyde Park: Bus lines [32](#), [33](#), [50](#). Commuter rail at Hyde Park station ([Providence/Stoughton](#) line).
- Adams Park (Section 2 trailhead): Bus lines [14](#), [30](#), [34](#), [35](#), [36](#), [37](#), [40](#), [51](#). Commuter rail at Roslindale Village station ([Needham](#) line).

SUGGESTED BATHROOM STOPS

Free public bathroom access is most limited on Section 1 but you will pass a good deal of businesses that might allow you to use their bathroom without purchasing anything.

- Mattapan station and nearby businesses
- Hyde Park branch of Boston Public Library and nearby businesses ***
- Walgreens at Washington Street
- Roslindale branch of Boston Public Library and nearby businesses

*Any bathroom affixed with *** requires an off-trail detour of 0.1-0.5 miles. All of the other suggested bathrooms are located along the trail.*

WHERE TO BUY PROVISIONS

Given how much of Section 1 is comprised of residential neighborhoods and woodlands, there aren't as many options for provisions as you'll experience on the subsequent Walking City Trail sections. Mattapan station offers easy access to a number of restaurants and markets. From here, your next opportunity will be Hyde Park's business hub, which the trail passes on the way from Sherrin Woods to Stony Brook Reservation. There are a handful of markets and restaurants along Washington Street as you descend toward the end of Section 1 at Adams Park, where you'll have many more options.