



Scenic day trips on Rhode Island bike paths

# READY TO ROLL?

A cyclist on the East Bay Bike Path pedals past a view of Pomham Rocks Lighthouse in East Providence. SANDOR BODO PHOTOS/PROVIDENCE JOURNAL FILE

**Jonny Williams** Providence Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

**P**ROVIDENCE – One of the joys of summer in Rhode Island is pulling out your bicycle, strapping on a helmet – safety first! – and hitting one of the state’s many scenic bike paths.

- Biking is, of course, a good way to get outside and exercise. It’s also a great opportunity to get to know the state a little better – whether it be its urban landscapes or rural settings.
- Whether you are a casual rider or a more avid cyclist, Rhode Island has a bike path for you. The state boasts a respectable 60 miles of paved trails – from the Blackstone River Bikeway up north to the South County Bike Path down south.

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The 5-mile Fred Lippitt Woonasquatucket River Greenway connects Johnston and Providence.

# Biking

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Here are some of the places you can go on a bike path in Rhode Island:

## Cumberland to Woonsocket and Providence on the Blackstone River Bikeway

Stretching 18.2 miles, the Blackstone River Bikeway is Rhode Island’s second-longest bike path. Most of it runs between Cumberland and Woonsocket, but adept bikers can make their way via on-road routes to India Point Park in Providence and connect to the East Bay Bike Path – making it a combined route more than 32 miles long.

As the name suggests, the bike path lies along the Blackstone River, featuring views of historic mills, museums and waterfalls. If you get a flat tire, there is a bicycle repair station behind the Captain Wilbur Kelly House Transportation Museum in Lincoln.

If you are craving a sweet treat along the way, swing by Lincoln Creamery, near the Blackstone River State Park.

## Johnston to Providence on the Fred Lippitt Woonasquatucket River Greenway

Stretching a short 5 miles, the Fred Lippitt Woonasquatucket River Greenway is among the shorter bike paths in Rhode Island. Yet it is useful for commuters who bike to work or school between Johnston and Providence. Starting at Lyman Avenue in Johnston, the path snakes alongside the Woonasquatucket River – as its name implies – and connects to the Providence Riverwalk at Providence Place mall. It makes for a perfect summer outing if you want to catch a movie at the mall or go explore downtown Providence. However, beware that several on-road segments make it a path for more experienced riders.

## Providence to Bristol on the East Bay Bike Path

Perhaps the best-known bike path in Rhode Island, the East Bay Bike Path runs about 14.5 miles between Providence’s India Point Park and Bristol’s Independence Park. It was built on a former rail line connecting Providence and Bristol and features scenic views of the Port of Providence, the Providence River, the Pomham Rocks Lighthouse and Narragansett Bay, among others.

Along the way, riders can stop by Boreal’s for some coffee and pastries. If you plan a ride on July Fourth, you can ride down to watch the parade in Bristol, said to be the longest-running continuous Independence Day celebration in the country.

## Coventry to Cranston on the Washington Secondary Bike Path

At 19 miles, the Washington Secondary Bike Path is the state’s longest bike path. It runs from Coventry, near Route 102, to Cranston Street in Cranston. If you are biking toward Coventry and feel like you are having to pedal harder, you are not imagining things. The path has a



Bikes come to the end of the William C. O’Neill Bike Path, also known as the South County Bike Path, behind Narragansett Elementary School in Narragansett. KRIS CRAIG/PROVIDENCE JOURNAL



Cyclists stop to view a waterfall and some old mill buildings on the Pawtuxet River while biking on the Washington Secondary Bike Path, a 19-mile route that follows an abandoned rail corridor from Cranston to Coventry. GLENN OSMUNDSON/PROVIDENCE JOURNAL FILE

gradual uphill slope from east to west. But the ride, past old textile mills and along the Pawtuxet River, is worth the effort.

Make sure to stop by Udder Delights in Coventry for ice cream and frozen treats.

## South Kingstown to Narragansett on the South County Bike Path

Also known as the William C. O’Neill Bike Path, the South County Bike Path stretches 7.8 miles from Kingston Station in South Kingstown to a community

center on Mumford Road in Narragansett. The path takes riders through Wakefield, which boasts many eateries and places to explore.

The path is popular: Between 60,000 to 100,000 people visit it annually. Yet it has one shortcoming: It is about three-quarters of a mile too short to reach Narragansett Town Beach. For more than a decade, Narragansett has sought to extend the bike path to the beach but has run into problems. The town has \$3 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation to do so, but the work must be completed by 2027.



The Blackstone River Bikeway curves through a meadow near the Captain Wilbur Kelly House Transportation Museum in Lincoln. PAUL EDWARD PARKER/PROVIDENCE JOURNAL FILE