

ATTRACTIONS IN WINDHAM, CT



1. Shaboo Stage
Main Street Historic District
In 2018, Windham cut the ribbon on the 40' high x 80' wide Shaboo Stage—the largest outdoor concert and event venue in eastern Connecticut. Since then, the venue has hosted many events: public and private; small and big (and really big!).

3. Willimantic Whitewater Park (WWP)
28 Bridge Street, Willimantic
Located where the Airlie trail crosses Bridge Street from Riverside Drive to the Eastern Railroad Museum, the WWP's mission is to recapture the waterfront of the Willimantic River by developing an urban waterfront and kayak/canoe park. WWP's largest event is Riverfest- an extremely popular family-friendly paddle day-held annually.

4. Windham Airport
15 Airport Road, North Windham
Windham Airport (K1JD), one of CT's 5 public use, General Aviation Airports, sits on 280 acres, is located in North Windham within walking distance of the Airlie Trail. The airport consists of two runways of 4,200 feet and 2,700 feet long. The airport hosts an annual Open House every September, featuring helicopter and plane tours of the area, food trucks and a number of activities aimed at children and families.

5. Thread City Frog Bridge
6. Willimantic Foot Bridge
7. Garden on the Bridge

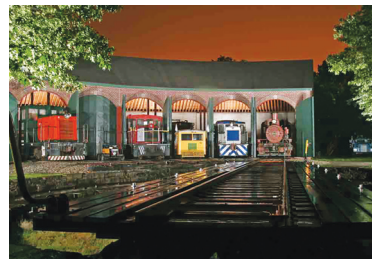


2. The Windham Club
184 Club Road, North Windham
WindhamClub.com
The Windham Club, located in North Windham and in close proximity to the Airlie trail, is an 18-hole course, managed by Bill Casper Golf, the nations' largest manager of public golf venues. After your round or, if you are just in the neighborhood, you can stop by the Minuteman Pub and Patio where you can enjoy pub fare with a creative twist. Have a cold beer, appetizer or full dinner. The Patio offers live music on weekends.



MUSEUMS & THE ARTS

Downtown Willimantic boasts three historic museums- The Windham Textile and History Museum, the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum and the Windham Historical Society (Jillson House). Main Street also is home to two performing arts venues- the Windham Theatre Guild (Burton Leavitt Theatre)



and the Arts at the Capitol Theatre (ACT). In addition, you can also view local artisans works for purchase at Swift Waters Artisans' Cooperative and the Kerri Gallery. All of these Main Street locations run parallel to the Riverside Drive portion of the Airlie Trail.

AIR LINE STATE PARK TRAIL WINDHAM

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Windham

The Town of Windham offers visitors numerous opportunities to *Ride, Walk and Play*. Windham is centrally located in eastern Connecticut on Routes 6 and 32, approximately 27 miles east of Hartford and 17 miles north of Norwich. The town includes the historic downtown of Willimantic and three rural villages- North and South Windham and Windham Center. The town is home to Eastern Connecticut State University.

For "day trippers," Windham/Willimantic offers a compelling series of events at various times of the year, including: February's Romantic Willimantic Chocolatefest, the May through October Third Thursday Street Fair, June's Victorian Neighborhood Tours and the Cinco de Mayo and July 4th Boom Box Parades.

Why come to Windham and Willimantic? Find Out Why...! #WhyWindhamCT



WHERE TO EAT

Windham and Willimantic offer an eclectic array of eating establishments. From two NY Times reviewed restaurants, Willimantic Brewing Company (Willibrew) and Stone Row (formerly Cafemantic) to a diverse mix of ethnic dining options including, Latin-American, (Mexican and Puerto Rican), Asian and Italian. Or, if you are looking to hit your sweet spot in downtown Willimantic, you can visit A Cupcake for Later, DQ or Limberia Tropical Algarte. Whether you are trying to work off or add on the calories after your Airlie Trail trek, Windham and Willimantic offers every option!



SHOPPING



Explore our historic downtown for a unique shopping experience ranging from award-winning businesses such as Eminence Ink, Bliss Boutique and Marketplace, Jewels Verne, the Bench Shop, YONO Yoga & Meditation Studio and the Grounded Coffee Company.

TRAIL TIPS

- New Intermodal Transportation Center (w/ bike racks and additional downtown parking) opens August 2021.
- Kayak/canoe launches run parallel to Willimantic River (near Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum).
- Hop River Trail is also accessible near Willimantic-Columbia town line.

For additional copies of this map, please email info@windhamct.com

AIR LINE STATE PARK TRAIL HISTORY

In the 1960s, over fifty miles of the rail bed from East Hampton to the Massachusetts border were acquired by the Connecticut State Park System to construct a recreational linear park.

This trail has a colorful past. The "Air Line" was envisioned as a direct line between New York City and Boston. It opened in 1873 and 25 miles shorter, it offered fierce competition to the shoreline rail service from New York to Boston. The mesmerizing, white-painted express train, known as the Ghost Train, made the run between Boston and New York in six hours, a record time for 1884.

The construction of the new rail line contained ambitious feats of engineering, blasting through granite hills, navigating deep valleys and rivers along the route. The Air Line Railroad's "Ghost Train" began in 1891 and was designed to attract wealthy travelers. Luxurious Pullman cars were painted white with gold trim, and the staff of the train wore formal white uniforms.



The catastrophic Great East Thompson Train Wreck on December 4, 1891 clouded the introduction of this fast new rail service. It was one of the greatest train wrecks in American history, and the only train accident to involve four trains. Still, over the next four years, successful businessmen and prominent citizens, including President Benjamin Harrison, rode the increasingly well-known Ghost Train. As it sped across eastern Connecticut, its luminescent cars were easily recognized, especially at twilight.

In the new 20th century, technology increased, railroad engines became faster, rail cars became longer, everything became heavier and after World War II, access to automobiles and interstate highways reduce the profitability of rail travel. The quaintness of the Air Line's winding grades as well as the weight restrictions of the spindly trestle bridges began to show its limitations. During its construction, the Air Line Railroad was expensive and controversial, but its operational costs would lead to its ultimate demise and abandonment. Passenger service on the Air Line ceased by 1937, and the track was completely abandoned by 1965.

Today, visitors enjoy scenic panoramas, village life, wildlife, hiking trails, and the tranquility of the rural landscape. The United States Department of the Interior recognized the southern section of the Air Line State Park Trail as a national recreation trail in 2002.

For more maps in this series, email outreach@ctrcd.org or visit ctrcd.org.



PARKING

Many parking areas serve the Air Line State Park Trail. Some primary locations are:

- THOMPSON**
 - Large parking lot at 121 Riverside Dr, (Rt 12, Mechanicsville)
 - Pull off for a few cars at Air Line trail crossing, 388 Sand Dam Rd
 - 5 car parking lot, located at 662 East Thompson Rd, near the junction of New Rd
- PUTNAM**
 - 18 Kennedy Dr, across from Canal
 - 80 Kennedy Dr, directly across from the South entrance of Simonzi Park
 - 98 Kennedy Dr
 - 165 Kennedy Dr (DMV lot)
- POMFRET**
 - 18 car paved parking lot at Pomfret Station, 13 Railroad Ave (off of Rt 169)
 - Parking adjacent to trail, in Town owned paved parking lot, west side of Pomfret Town Hall
 - Parking available in rear of Town owned paved parking lot at Pomfret Community Center, 207 Mashamoquet Rd (Rt. 44)
- HAMPTON**
 - Potter Rd 0.6 mile north of its intersection with Rt 6 in Goodwin State Forest
- WINDHAM**
 - Intersection of Beaver Hill Rd and Windham Rd (Rt 203) in North Windham, at the CT Eastern Railroad Museum and in downtown Willimantic.
- COLUMBIA**
 - Rt 87, Cook Hill Rd and Village Hill Rd
- EAST HAMPTON**
 - Depot Hill, Cobalt; Aldens Crossing (at Rt 16); Forest St (Between Hayes Rd and Childs Rd); Town Hall Rd (Off Main St.); Main Street; Watrous Street; Smith Street (at Cranberry Bog)
- PORTLAND**
 - Parking at 82 Middle Haddam Rd