



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



# Mineral Belt Trail

*Colorado*



## Mineral Belt Trail

Colorado

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The Mineral Belt Trail offers a loop through Leadville, which is tucked into the Rocky Mountains of central Colorado. This paved, high-elevation (10,000+ feet) trail has spectacular views of the Sawatch and Mosquito mountains as it journeys among pine and aspen trees. The trail also provides access to the Leadville National Historic Landmark District and Leadville Mining District.

Leadville, as one might deduce from its name, was once a mining boomtown, beginning with the discovery of gold here in 1859. The three former railroads on which portions of the Mineral Belt Trail were built, served these mines, including the trail's namesake Mineral Belt Line. Many historical relics from this era—such as an old mining tower, ore carts, a mine chute and other aged equipment—have been placed along the route to serve as

an outdoor mining museum. All of these items were donated by locals to honor their community's heritage. Interpretative signage, placed every quarter-mile along the trail, details the riches and risks of the mining industry, shares stories about the city's most memorable inhabitants and expounds on other interesting historical tidbits.

And railroad history buffs take note: In downtown Leadville, just a half mile from the trailhead at Ice Palace Park, you'll find the depot to board the Leadville, Colorado & Southern Railroad, a scenic excursion train ride, on which the conductor tells the history of the region's railroads and the city. As you pedal along the trail, you'll be able to glimpse its tracks—and even the train itself, if your timing is right—along the northeastern part of the trail loop.

The rail-trail has an average grade of 3 percent with a maximum grade of 5 percent. If you begin your journey at Ice Palace Park, which is between Mile Marker 1 and 2, and travel in a clockwise direction, you will have a gentle but steady climb to Mile Marker 5, and then enjoy a rewarding downhill ride to trail's end. When planning a trip on this trail, also note that there are few restrooms and water fountains along the way, so plan accordingly.

In winter, the Mineral Belt Trail is groomed for cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and riding on snow with fat tire bikes.



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**States:** Colorado

**Counties:** Lake

Length: 11.6 miles

**Trail end points:** Ice Palace Park to Highway 24

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike, Inline

Skating, Wheelchair Accessible, Walking, Cross

Country Skiing

## Parking & Trail Access

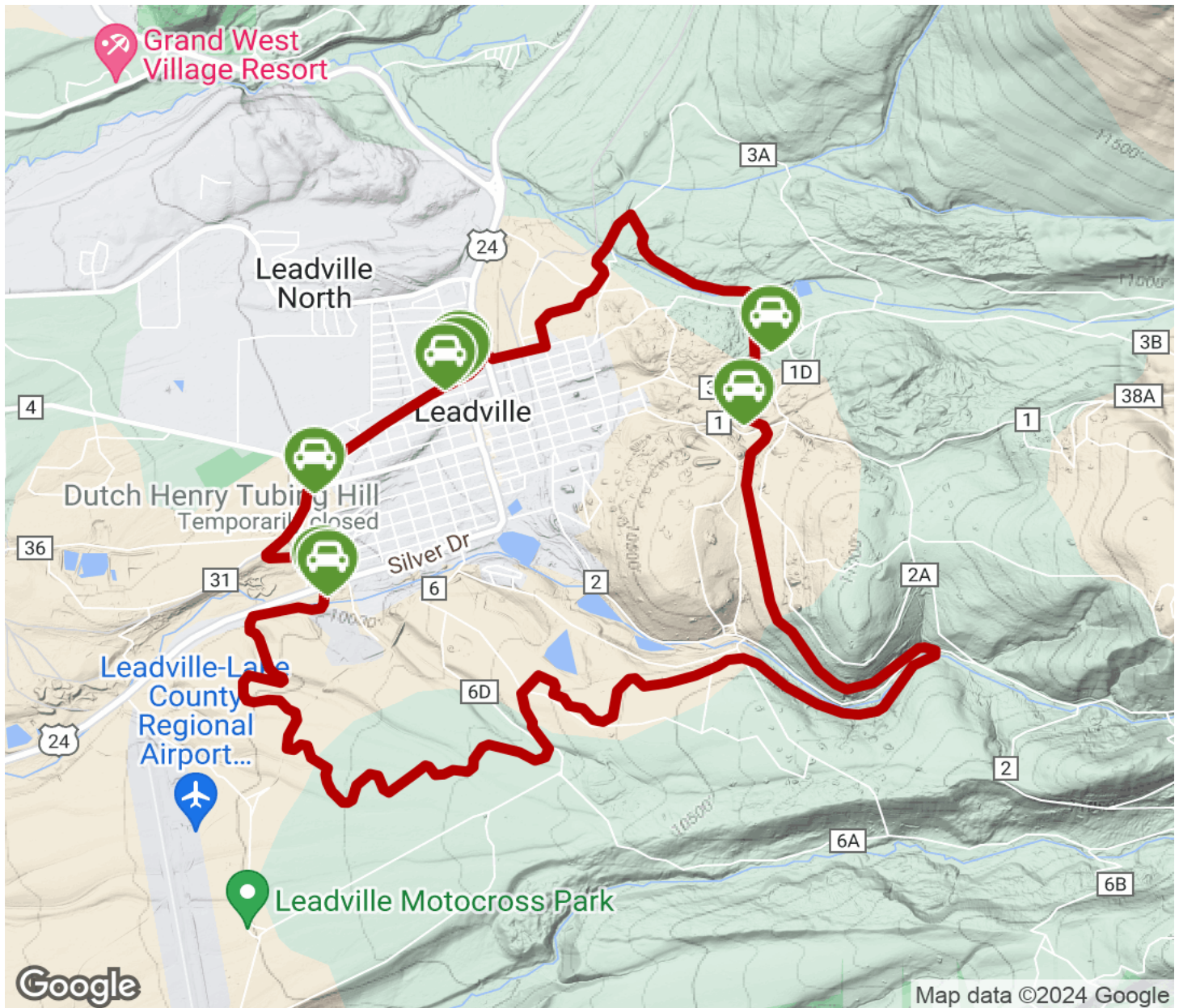
The best place to begin your journey is just north of downtown at Ice Palace Park (Harrison Ave. and W. 10th St.), where parking, restrooms, and drinking water are available. On the west side of town, another open is the parking lot at Washington St. and W. 6th St. A mile farther south, there is also an unpaved parking lot at the Dutch Henry Trailhead off US Highway 24, west of College Road.





# Mineral Belt Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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