



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Great Western Trail (IA)

Iowa



Great Western Trail (IA)

Iowa

Built on a former section of the Chicago Great Western Railroad (built in 1893), the Great Western Trail spans 16.5 miles from just



territory with cornfields and woods; here the ride is quiet and peaceful.

About 3 miles southwest of Orilla, the trail passes through the tiny town of Cumming, where there are restrooms and parking available, as well as a bar and a distillery.

The route then becomes completely rural, with open fields quickly transitioning to shady woodlands that feel extremely remote—particularly during the work week. Highlights along this stretch include a historic railcar and panoramic views of the North River. The trail finishes at a large trailhead in Martensdale, where restrooms and parking are available.

Note: Near the northern end of the Great Western Trail, an expansion of Veterans Parkway will shift the route of the trail slightly. Construction of the new trail section paralleling the new roadway between SR 5 and the city of Cumming is expected to be completed in 2019.

Built on a former section of the Chicago Great Western Railroad (built in 1893), the Great Western Trail spans 16.5 miles from just outside of urban Des Moines southward to Martensdale.

Begin your journey in the southern section of Water Works Park, just north of George Flagg Parkway, where you'll find parking, restrooms, and several nearby bars and restaurants that are popular with cyclists and other trail users.

Leaving the outskirts of Des Moines, you'll come across a major street crossing at State Route 28, and then cut through the Willow Creek Golf Course before reaching a second major crossing at SR 5. A short time later, you'll reach Orilla, after which the trail empties into rural



Great Western Trail (IA)

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States: Iowa

Counties: Polk, Warren

Length: 16.5 miles

Trail end points: Water Works Park at Gray's Lake Road north of George Flagg Pkwy. (Des Moines) to Inwood St. and Iowa Ave. (Martensdale)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Concrete

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline Skating, Wheelchair Accessible, Walking, Cross

Parking & Trail Access

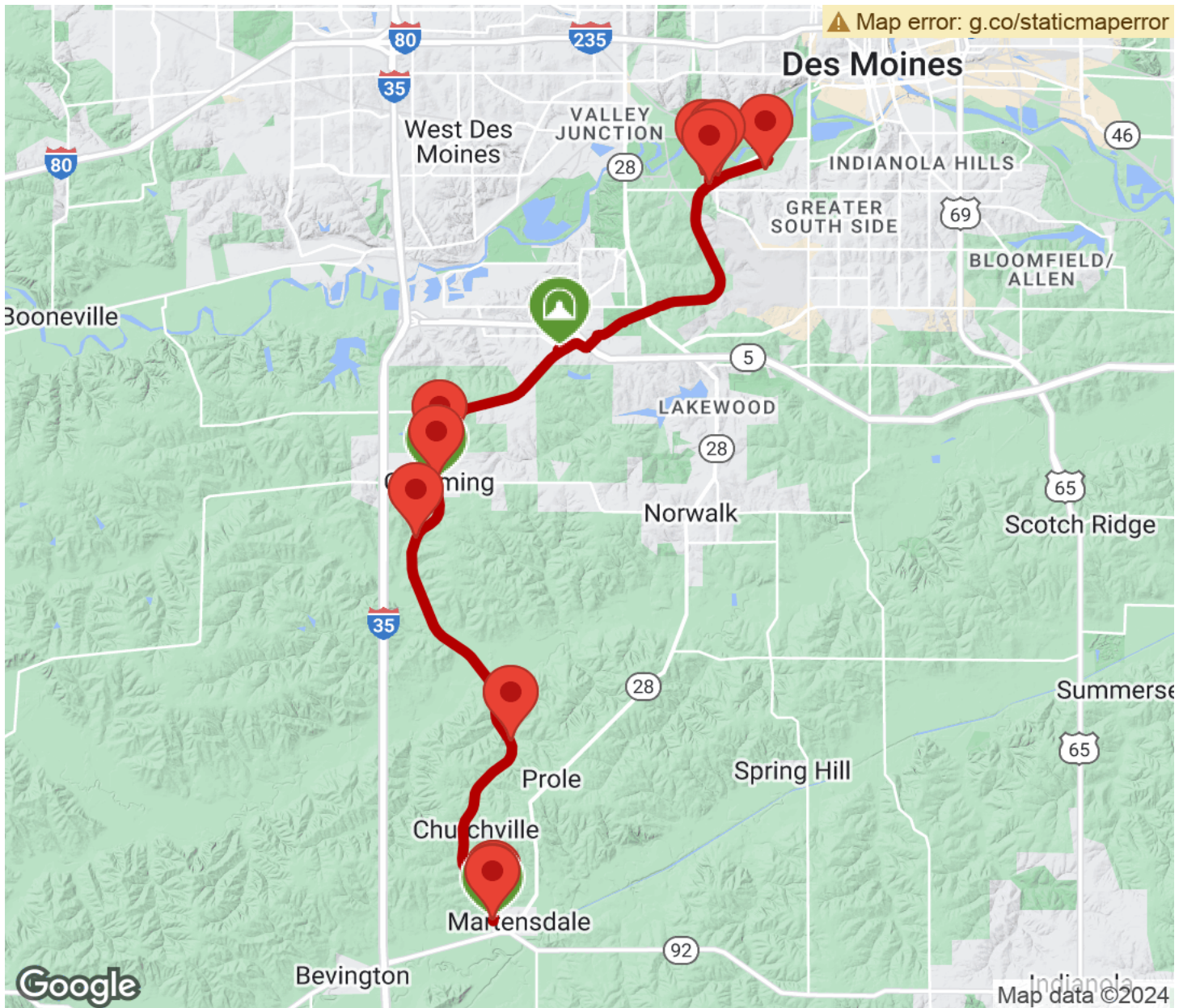
To reach the northern endpoint and parking in Des Moines from I-235, take Exit 7 toward Martin Luther King Jr. Pkwy. (7A if heading west and 7B if heading east), and head south on Martin Luther King Jr. Pkwy. for about 1.1 miles. Continue south on Fleur Drive for 0.8 mile. Turn right onto George Flagg Pkwy. and go just under 2 miles. Turn left into the parking lot, just across from the Izaak Walton League building. The endpoint is located 0.1 mile north along the trail at Water Works Park.

To reach the southern trailhead in Martensdale from I-35, take Exit 56 for SR 92 toward Indianola/Winterset. Head east on SR 92 for 1.3 miles, and turn north onto 30th Ave. Go 0.3 mile, and turn right onto Inwood St. Go 0.3 mile, and turn left into the trailhead parking lot.



Great Western Trail (IA)

Iowa



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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