



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Zim Smith
Mid-County
Trail
New York



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Popular with residents of Saratoga County who commute under their own power or love to exercise outdoors, the nearly 12-mile Zim Smith Mid-County Trail is considered the backbone of a growing trail system, with connections to major tech companies and hiking trails.

Near-term plans called for extending the trail east to Mechanicville for an eventual connection to the future Champlain Canalway Trail; this crucial connector was completed in 2020. Longer-term plans propose a northern route through Saratoga Spa State Park to Railroad Run in Saratoga Springs. The trail, named for local historic preservationist Zimri Smith, has been honored as a National Recreation Trail by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The trail follows an old railroad corridor completed as the Rensselaer and Saratoga Railroad between Ballston Spa and Troy in 1836. Leased by the Delaware & Hudson (D&H) Railroad beginning in 1871, it was acquired by D&H in 1945.

Ballston Spa marks the northern trailhead. At one time, four railroads passed through the village, founded near a mineral spring known for its curative powers. The paved trail starts out along an active railroad for a short distance, a configuration known as rail-with-trail, before veering into the woods, passing an industrial park, and arriving at Shenantaha Creek Park. The name means "deer water" in Iroquois, and you can find flax mill ruins there. The park also has restrooms and a drinking fountain, as well as other recreational amenities.

The path rolls through remote woodland another 1.5 miles until it passes beneath I-87 and beside a dirt trail on the left known as the Zim Smith Connector. The connector goes 1.2 miles east to US 9 in Malta, where it connects to a paved trail system serving the Luther Forest Technology Campus, home of chip makers and other tech companies.

In another mile, a handsome white-frame church and other period buildings signal your arrival in Round Lake Village, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Victorian village, with quiet streets and gingerbread cottages featuring long porches, recalls a time when it served as a Methodist camp meeting site with thousands of visitors every summer. The Round Lake Auditorium, dating from the late 1800s on Wesley Avenue, is home to a working 1,900-pipe organ that was named a National Historic Landmark in 2017.

Leaving Round Lake, the trail crosses US 9 in 0.7 mile. The trail passes bird-viewing spots in the wetlands and there is a trailhead at Coons Crossing Road in Halfmoon. The Mechanicville extension travels about 3 miles along the south side of the railroad yard to Elizabeth Street Extension in Mechanicville.



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States: New York

Counties: Saratoga

Length: 11.5miles

Trail end points: Oak St., 0.3 mile south of E. High St. (Ballston Spa) to Elizabeth Street (Mechanicville)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike,Inline

Skating,Wheelchair

Accessible,Snowmobiling,Walking,Cross

Parking & Trail Access

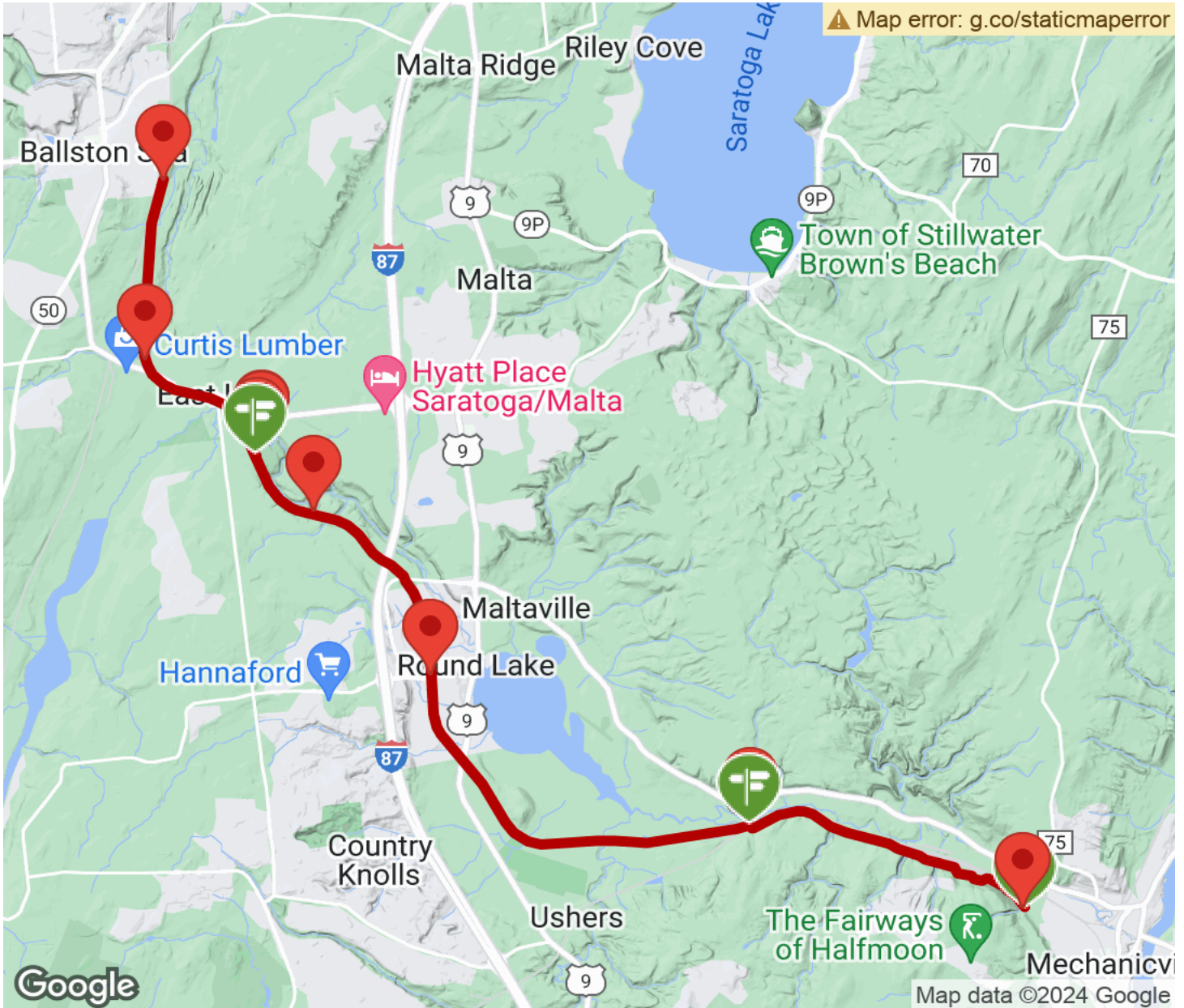
To reach the Ballston Spa trailhead from I-87, take Exit 13S toward US 9 S. Go 0.6 mile on US 9 S, and turn right onto Malta Ave./County Road 63. Go 2.9 miles, and turn left onto Hyde Blvd.; then go 0.6 mile, and turn left onto E. High St. Go 0.2 mile, and turn right onto Oak St. Go 0.3 mile, and look for parking at the end of the street.

To reach the Coons Crossing trailhead from I-87, take Exit 10 to Ushers Road. Head northeast on Ushers Road 0.7 mile, and veer left to stay on Ushers Road; then go 0.6 mile, and bear right to stay on Ushers Road. Go 1.3 miles, and turn left onto Cary Road/Coons Crossing Road. Go about 300 feet and look for parking on the left or right.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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