



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Genesee  
Riverway  
Trail**  
*New York*



## Genesee Riverway Trail

New York

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By the early 1800s, Rochester had earned the nickname of Flour City because of its numerous mills that allowed the young town to rapidly become the largest flour producer in the United States. The flour mills were located along the Genesee River, whose waterfalls provided power to keep them running. Now, the Genesee Riverway Trail closely follows the river on its north–south course through Rochester, providing stunning vistas of the falls on the way.

While the waterfalls near the midpoint of the trail are a main attraction, there's plenty more to see along the well-used trail. Begin your trip in the north at Ontario Beach Park, where the trail juts out into Lake Ontario along a pier offering panoramic views. Back on land, you'll pass the park's historical—and still operating—carousel from

1905. Follow signs to continue through the oft-crowded park and parking lots to meet the Genesee River for the first time. For a short distance, you'll course between riverside docks and a rail line, in a configuration known as [rail-with-trail](#).

Soon you'll arrive in Turning Point Park, where a long and winding boardwalk transports trail users across the marshy Genesee River Turning Basin, which once served as a turnaround point for boats before they reached the river's waterfalls, as well as a loading dock for ferries transporting rail cars full of coal. Back on land, the trail continues south as a rail-trail on the former line, eventually curving to meet Lake Avenue, where the trail then parallels the roadway. (Cyclists will need to pay attention, as the pathway eventually becomes unidirectional on both sides of the road, requiring a crossing for those traveling southbound.)

After transitioning briefly to sidewalks and bike lanes, the multiuse trail continues, unsigned, at Maplewood Drive. Signs resume where a turn to the left will take you across a trail bridge; take the turn for river views or direct access to the Seneca Park Zoo, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted. Back on the main route, the trail narrows as it passes under the granite-arched Veterans Memorial Bridge before emerging into a wooded corridor that displays spectacular colors in the fall months. You'll be able to glimpse the river again too—while you began alongside boats docked in the river, the water now courses at a significant distance below you. The trailside Maplewood Park along this stretch provides an excellent stopping point, with a rose garden (and restrooms) likely to beckon.

Immediately after crossing Driving Park Avenue, you'll reach your first waterfall. Lower Falls Park delivers spectacular views of the eponymous waterfall and attractive Driving Park Bridge, as well as interpretive signage. Just to the south, the Middle Falls lack views but provide an excellent reminder of the importance of the falls to Rochester, as you cross via the top of an active hydroelectric dam. Now on the eastern side of



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**States:** New York

**Counties:** Monroe

Length: 22.8miles

**Trail end points:** Ontario Beach Park on Lake Ontario at Beach Ave. and Lake Ave. (Irondequoit) to Genesee Valley Greenway, 0.5 mile southeast of NY 383/Scottsville Road and Air Park Dr. (Rochester)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt, Concrete

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike, Inline

## Parking & Trail Access

Parking at the trail's northern end is available in Ontario Beach Park. To reach the park from I-490, take Exit 21 for I-590 S/NY 590 N. Follow signs for, and merge onto, NY 590 N. Travel 5.4 miles on NY 590 until you reach a traffic circle. At the circle, take the second exit onto Sea Breeze Dr., and travel 1.1 miles, continuing on Sea Breeze Dr. through two traffic circles along the way. At the third traffic circle, take the third exit onto Durand Blvd., and continue straight as it becomes Sweet Fern Road, Pine Valley Road, and Lake Shore Blvd. After 3.3 miles, turn right onto St. Paul Blvd. then immediately turn left onto Pattonwood Dr. Go 0.9 mile, crossing the Genesee River, and turn right onto Lake Ave. After 0.6 mile, turn right onto Corrigan St. to drive directly into Ontario Beach Park's parking lots. The trail begins along the pier at the park's northeast corner.

Parking near the trail's southern end can be found in Genesee Valley Park. To reach the park from I-390 S, take Exit 16A for E. River Road toward NY 15/W. Henrietta Road, and turn right onto E. River Road. In 0.1 mile proceed through the traffic circle, then in 0.3 mile take your first right onto Hawthorne Dr. Follow Hawthorne Dr. 0.3 mile, then turn right onto Moore Road. Cross the Erie Canal, then take your first left into the park.



# Genesee Riverway Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



**TrailLink**  
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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