



2026

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Interurban Trail (IL)

Illinois



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The paved Interurban Trail provides 8.4 miles of suburban and rural scenery for users between Chatham and Springfield. It follows the former route of the electrified Illinois Terminal Railroad (originally Illinois Traction System) that connected St. Louis, Missouri, with towns in central Illinois from the 1890s to 1980s.

Today, bicycle commuters from southwestern Sangamon County aren't the only ones using this transportation corridor. Most of the way, the trail parallels the Union Pacific Railroad tracks that carry Amtrak's high-speed Lincoln Service and Texas Eagle from Chicago to St. Louis.

The trail starts at South Main Street in Chatham, but you'll probably begin 0.2 mile north at the parking lot for the Chatham Railroad Museum, where a plethora of

artifacts, photos, and documents are displayed. This vintage 1902 railway station served the adjacent Chicago and Alton Railroad, which was eventually acquired (by then operating under a different name) by Union Pacific.

As you leave the museum, be aware that the trail lacks restrooms and water fountains, though facilities are available in communities along the route. Head north on North State Street from the train museum; you will reconnect with the Interurban Trail after crossing East Walnut Street. In 1 mile, the trail skirts along a paved golf cart path as it winds through the manicured greens and fairways of a golf course. Only 0.25 mile beyond the golf course is a highlight of the Interurban Trail: Lake Springfield. The trail uses a refurbished railroad bridge to cross a narrow elbow of the 4,200-acre reservoir that supplies water to residents of Springfield and surrounding areas all year.

Beyond Lake Springfield, the trail passes through farmland for about 2.5 miles until you pass beneath I-72 and the outskirts of Springfield, the state capital. The trail leaves the old rail corridor for the last 3 miles as it maneuvers around busy roads and interchanges to a trailhead parking lot on West North Street. From here, you can follow the Wabash Trail 2.1 miles to a shopping district on the west side of Springfield.

A small oasis from the bustle of suburban and city life, the Interurban Trail is exactly the kind of useful and pleasant link you expect from a rail-trail.



Interurban Trail (IL)

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States: Illinois

Counties: Sangamon

Length: 8.4 miles

Trail end points: Wabash Ave. and S. Park Ave.
(Springfield) to S. Main St. near E. Spruce St.
(Chatham)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline

Skating, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible

Parking & Trail Access

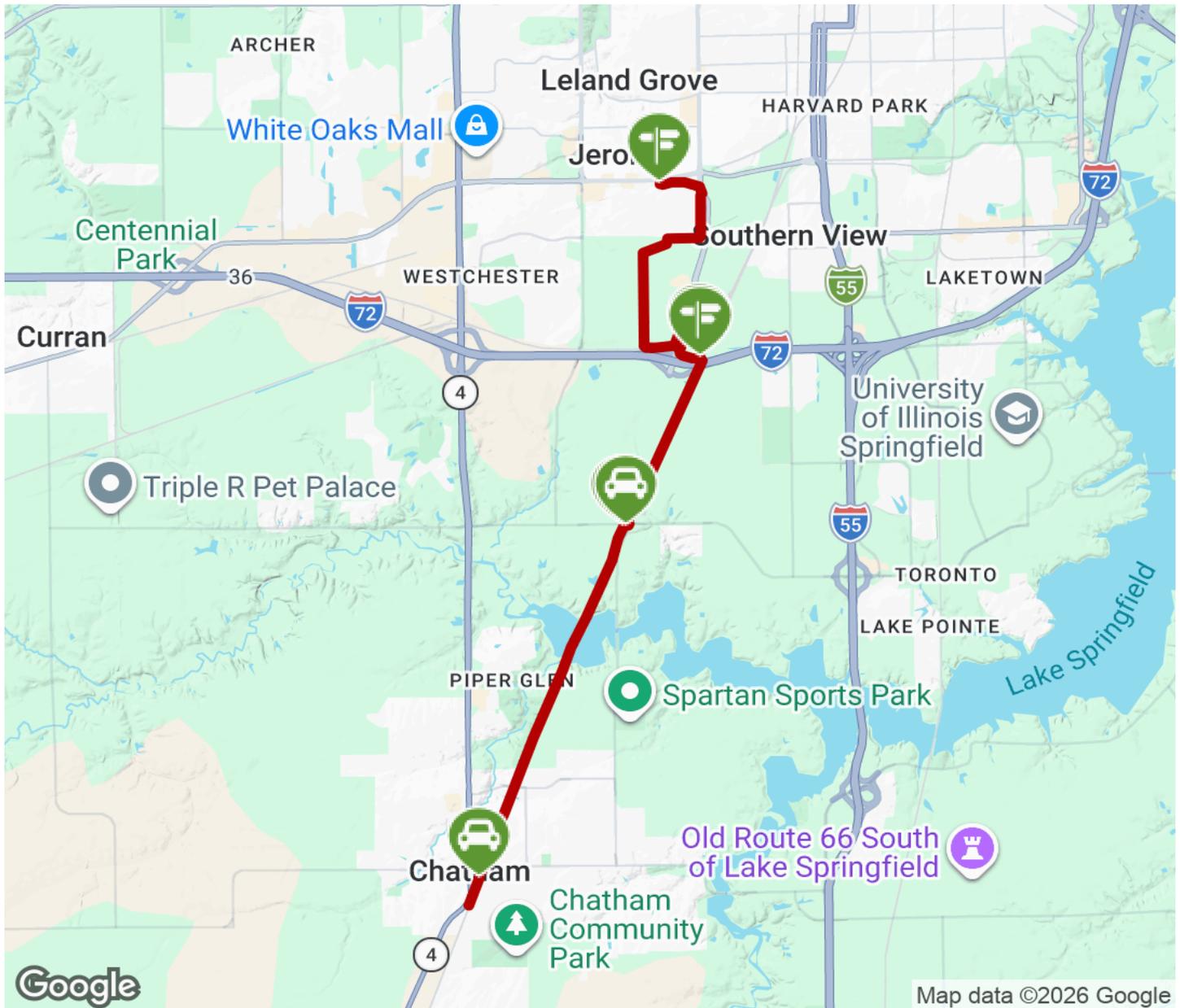
To reach the southern trailhead in Chatham from I-55, take Exit 88 and follow signs toward Chatham. Head southwest 1 mile on Palm Road and turn right onto Chatham Road. In 1.2 miles, Chatham Road becomes E. Walnut St. Go 1.9 miles to N. State St. and turn left. The parking lot for the Chatham Railroad Museum is on your left in 0.1 mile.

To reach the northern trailhead in Springfield from I-72, take Exit 96 for MacArthur Blvd. Head north 1.6 miles on S. MacArthur Blvd., and turn left onto W. North St. Go 0.4 mile; the Interurban and Wabash Trails parking lot is on your right, just before S. Park Ave.



Interurban Trail (IL)

Illinois



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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