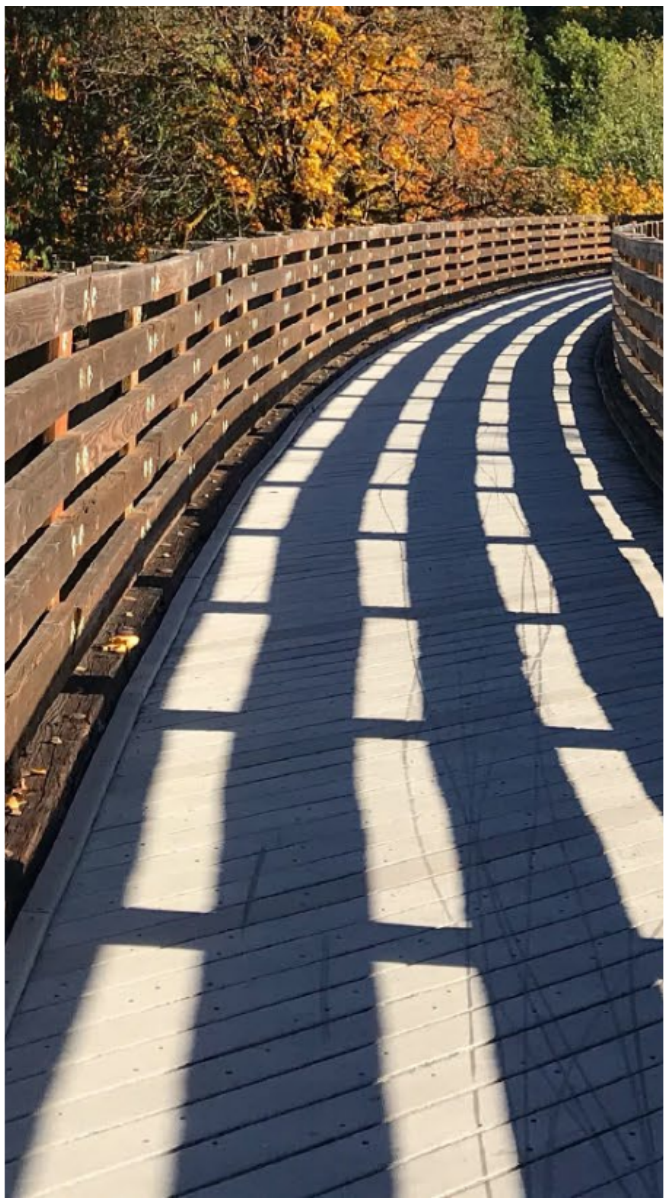
TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

2025

TrailLink Unlimited

Guides



Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trail (TART)

Michigan

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The 13-mile Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation (TART) Trail provides trail users with extended waterfront access in

The 13-mile Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation (TART) Trail provides trail users with extended waterfront access in Traverse City, the self-proclaimed Cherry Capital of the World, brushing by swimming beaches and a bayfront state park as it weaves through town. The trail then makes its way east through the country-side before terminating in Williamsburg.

Sitting at the head of Lake Michigan's Grand Traverse Bay, Traverse City, founded in 1847, was once the site of a sawmill that processed timber harvested in northern Michigan's old-growth forests. The city grew into a manufacturing center with the arrival of railroads, but in recent years has relied on tourism and agriculture for its livelihood. It hosts the annual National Cherry Festival in July, as well as craft-beer and winemaking events.

The TART Trail—TART being an appropriate acronym in light of the area's cherry growing—runs east–west using the rights-of-way of highways and a working railroad. The multiuse trail is paved throughout, marked by red and green TART logo arrows. A partnership of trail volunteers and local governments conducts maintenance, including snow removal in the winter.

Beginning at the junction with Leelanau Trail, another TART project on East Carter Road, you'll pass through a commercial area and emerge onto a wide sidewalk trail alongside Southwest Bay Shore Drive/MI 22, which becomes West Grandview Parkway as it enters town.

The trail crosses the busy four-lane highway at North Elmwood Avenue and skirts West End Beach (where there's parking) and Clinch Beach, which are big draws for tourists. The Clinch Park Marina sits between the two beaches. You can opt instead to stay on the trail along the south side of the parkway until Division Street, at the end of West End Beach, where there is another crossing. You'll then continue along the north side of the parkway and through Clinch Park, eventually crossing the Boardman River. A bronze sculpture of a parent's attempt to help a child ride a bike may catch your eye before the trail heads south and passes beneath East Grandview Parkway alongside the Boardman River.

A bike lane and sidewalks along Woodmere Avenue lead you to the 2-mile Boardman Lake Trail along the east side of its namesake, which starts at Hull Park and ends at Medalie Park. If you want to make this connection, travel for a few blocks, pass the library, turn right on Hannah Avenue, and proceed 100 yards to the lake.

The trail then wends its way through the hustle and bustle of downtown Traverse City, providing easy access to shops, pubs, and eateries. Just west of Boyd and Railroad Avenues, a restored depot honors the history of railroad days gone by.

Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trail (TART)

Michigan

States: Michigan
Counties: Grand Traverse,Leelanau
Length: 13miles
Trail end points: E. Carter Road between S. Thorn Creek Dr. and SW Bay Shore Dr./ Leelanau Trail (Greilickville) to SR 72 at SR 22 (Traverse City)
Trail surfaces: Asphalt,Concrete
Trail category: Rail-Trail
Trail activities: Bike,Inline Skating,Wheelchair Accessible,Walking

Parking & Trail Access

southern trailhead in Greilickville. To reach the trailhead from US 31, take the highway north into Traverse City, where it becomes Division St. Where Division dead-ends at the intersection with MI 22/
W. Grandview Pkwy., near the waterfront, turn left onto Grandview, go 1.9 miles, and turn left again onto E. Cherry Bend Road. After 0.4 mile, turn right into the trailhead parking lot. The western endpoint for the TART Trail is 0.9 mile south.

To reach the easternmost parking at Traverse City State Park from I-75, take Exit 254 toward Traverse City. Go 0.4 mile off the exit; then go 0.6 mile north on Bus. Loop I-75, and veer left onto MI 72 E./N. James St. in Grayling. Follow for 0.7 mile, turning left to stay on MI 72 W. Go 17.5 miles, and turn right onto County Road 571. After 2 miles, turn left onto Nash Road NE. Follow for 6 miles and, just after the intersection with MI 66/US 131 N. in Kalkaska, continue straight on MI 72 W./W. Mile Road for 15.8 miles. At the traffic circle in Williamsburg, take the second right to stay on MI 72 W. for 0.5 mile. At the next traffic circle, take the first exit to stay on MI 72 W. for 0.8 mile. Turn left onto MI 72/US 31 S. and follow for 3.6 miles. Turn left into the Traverse City State Park parking lot. The trail runs along the southern border of the park. Follow the trail and county-road connector 6.7 miles to reach the eastern endpoint at Bates Road.

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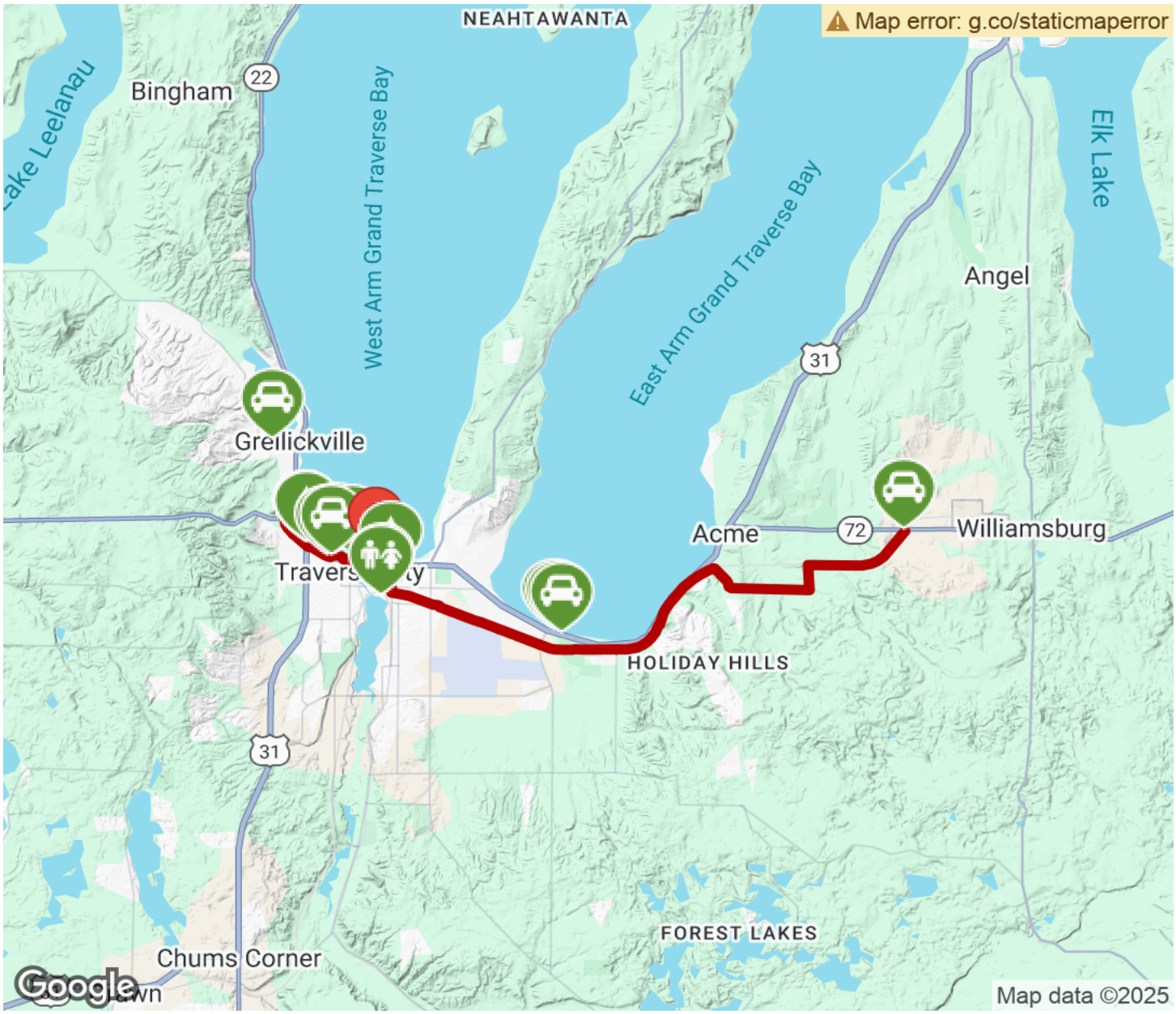

Trailhead Restroom Parking Water Fountain Tunnel

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