



2025

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



William Field Memorial Hart- Montague Trail State Park

Michigan



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The name tells the tale of the William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail State Park. Rolling for 22.7 paved miles through the farms, orchards, and forests of western Michigan between Hart and Montague, the trail may never have come into existence if not for the late William Field.

About the Route

Hart, the northern endpoint of the William Field Memorial Hart Montague Trail State Park is not only the gateway to the giant dunes and beaches of Lake Michigan but also is home to the annual Asparagus Festival in June, complete with a parade and crowning of the Asparagus Queen. As the trail heads south away from the "Asparagus Capital of the Nation", the next opportunity for food and

water is the town of Mears.

5.87 miles south of Mears, the trail crosses through Shelby, a small village renowned for being the last home of the passenger pigeons. South of Shelby, the trail reaches New Era, near the halfway point of the trail and to a trailside ice cream shop in the summer.

A four-mile section of the trail between West Fruitvale Road and Rothbury is open to horseback riders. South of Rothbury, the trail passes Christmas Tree Farms, Orchards, and the 100-acre Clear Springs Nature Preserve. Be on the lookout for deer in the fields and orchards, especially near dawn and dusk hours.

The trail reaches its southern endpoint in Montague, next to a campground on White Lake. A side trip here takes trail users to the world's largest working weathervane, a 48-foot structure topped by a replica of the Ella Ellenwood, a 19th-century schooner.

Trail History

As a fruit grower from Shelby and an Oceana County commissioner in the early 1980s, Mr. William Field couldn't raise interest among his fellow commissioners to turn the recently dismantled railroad into a recreational trail. Fearing a lost opportunity, he bought the corridor in 1982 and donated it to the state. Seven years later, the trail's northern half opened as the state's first paved rail trail, followed in 1991 by the second half. The state legislature honored his efforts by naming the trail for him in 2014. In 2016, the state completed a yearlong face-lift for the trail, which included asphalt resurfacing and widening to 10 feet.

The Chicago and Michigan Lake Shore Railroad originally built that rail bed in 1872 as a segment of its route from New Buffalo to Pentwater. It later came under the control of the Chicago and West Michigan Railway, the Pere Marquette



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States: Michigan

Counties: Muskegon, Oceana

Length: 22.7 miles

Trail end points: Wood St. (Hart) to Spring St. (Montague)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Wheelchair

Accessible, Horseback

Riding, Snowmobiling, Walking, Cross Country

Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

The William Field Memorial Hart-Montague Trail State Park runs between Wood St. (Hart) and Spring St. (Montague), with parking at the southern end.

Parking is also available at:

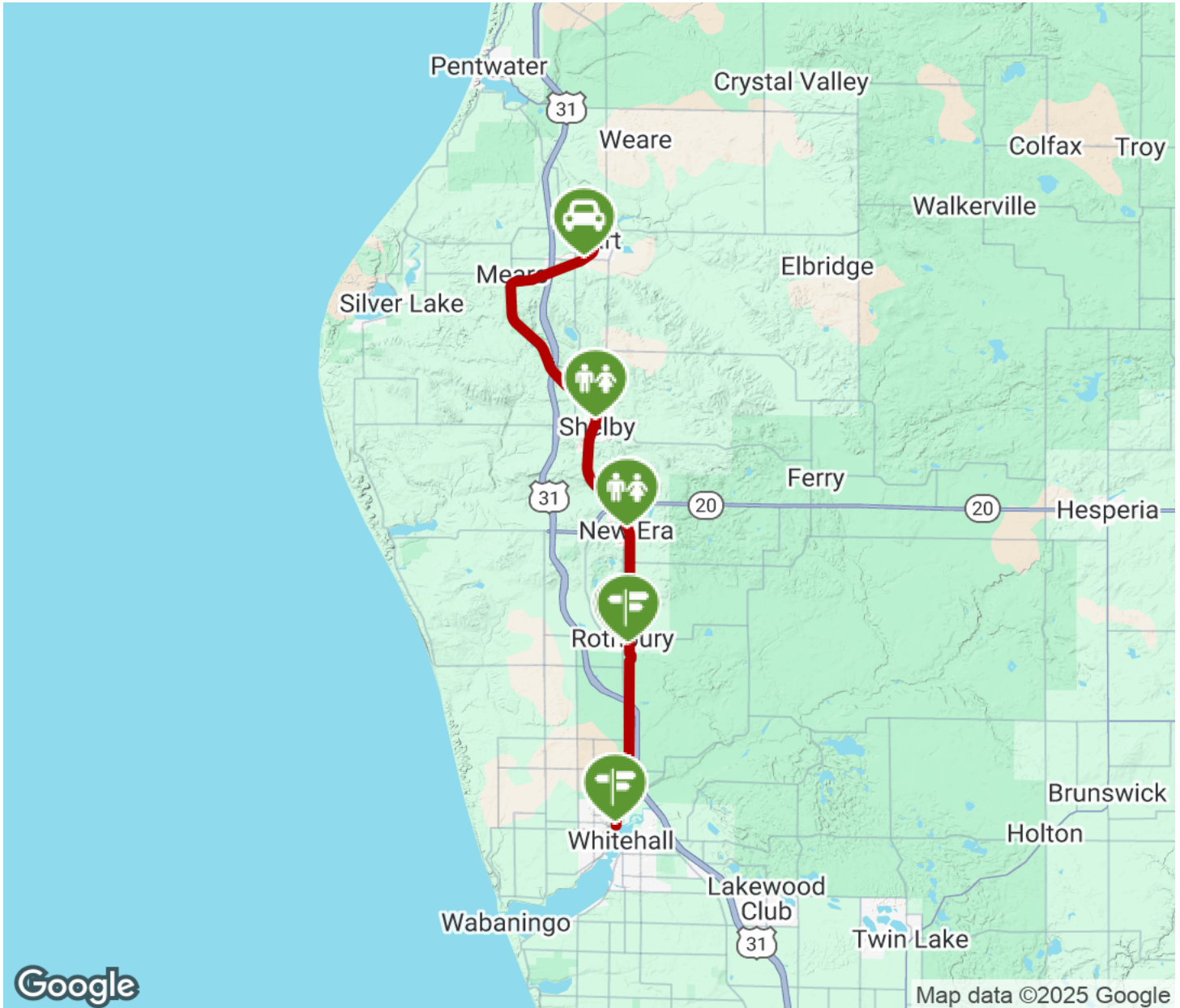
- 37 W 3rd St (Shelby)

See [TrailLink Map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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