



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides   



**MCT Nickel
Plate Trail**
Illinois



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The Madison County Transit (MCT) Nickel Plate Trail is the longest of the county's trails and perhaps the most diverse in its offerings. On the west, it begins at a junction with the [MCT Nature Trail](#), offering a rather typical mix of rural rail-trail scenery: tree-shaded trailway, open farmland, highways and scattered businesses.

That all changes at Bluff Road. There's an old stone grain silo beside the trail there, reminding one of the earlier railroad's connection to local agriculture. But then there's no more farmland to be seen as the trail moves on to navigate more suburban areas of woods, neighborhoods and roadways. Approaching the village of Glen Carbon, there's the junction with the [Glen Carbon Heritage Bike Trail](#) and popular Miner Park just beyond. Words like "carbon" and "miner" are a reminder of coal's place in

early days of this region.

Ahead near the viaduct under Route 159 in Edwardsville, the trail intersects the MCT Nature Trail (again) and the [MCT Goshen Trail](#)—here at the gateway to an area of much industry and railroad activity in years past. There were large rail yards and many train lines intersecting here in the historic village of LeClaire area. Impressive remnants of this past can be seen on up, just past Troy Road. The community college there still uses refurbished buildings of the N.O. Nelson industrial complex. And plainly displayed is the old Edwardsville train station that has been turned around and moved to the other side of the old rail line.

A little further along, the trail is intersected by the [MCT Quercus Grove Trail](#) and leaves the city. The surface changes from asphalt to crushed stone, and the trail heads out for mile after mile of open farmland, all the way to the community of New Douglas.



MCT Nickel Plate Trail

Illinois

States: Illinois

Counties: Madison

Length: 28.5miles

Trail end points: S. Main St., just north of E. Huber St. (New Douglas) to SR 162 & Old Edwardsville Rd. (Pontoon Beach)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt,Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike,Inline

Skating,Walking,Wheelchair Accessible

Parking & Trail Access

To reach the Glen Carbon Park & Ride Lot from I-270, take Exit 9/IL Route 157/Bluff Road and go south for 1 mile to the turn-in on the right. Trail access is to the north of the parking lot.

To reach the Alhambra Township Park from I-55, take Exit 30/IL Route 140 and go east for 5.2 miles to the turn-in on the right. Parking is at the ball diamonds and trail access is at the southeast corner of the park.



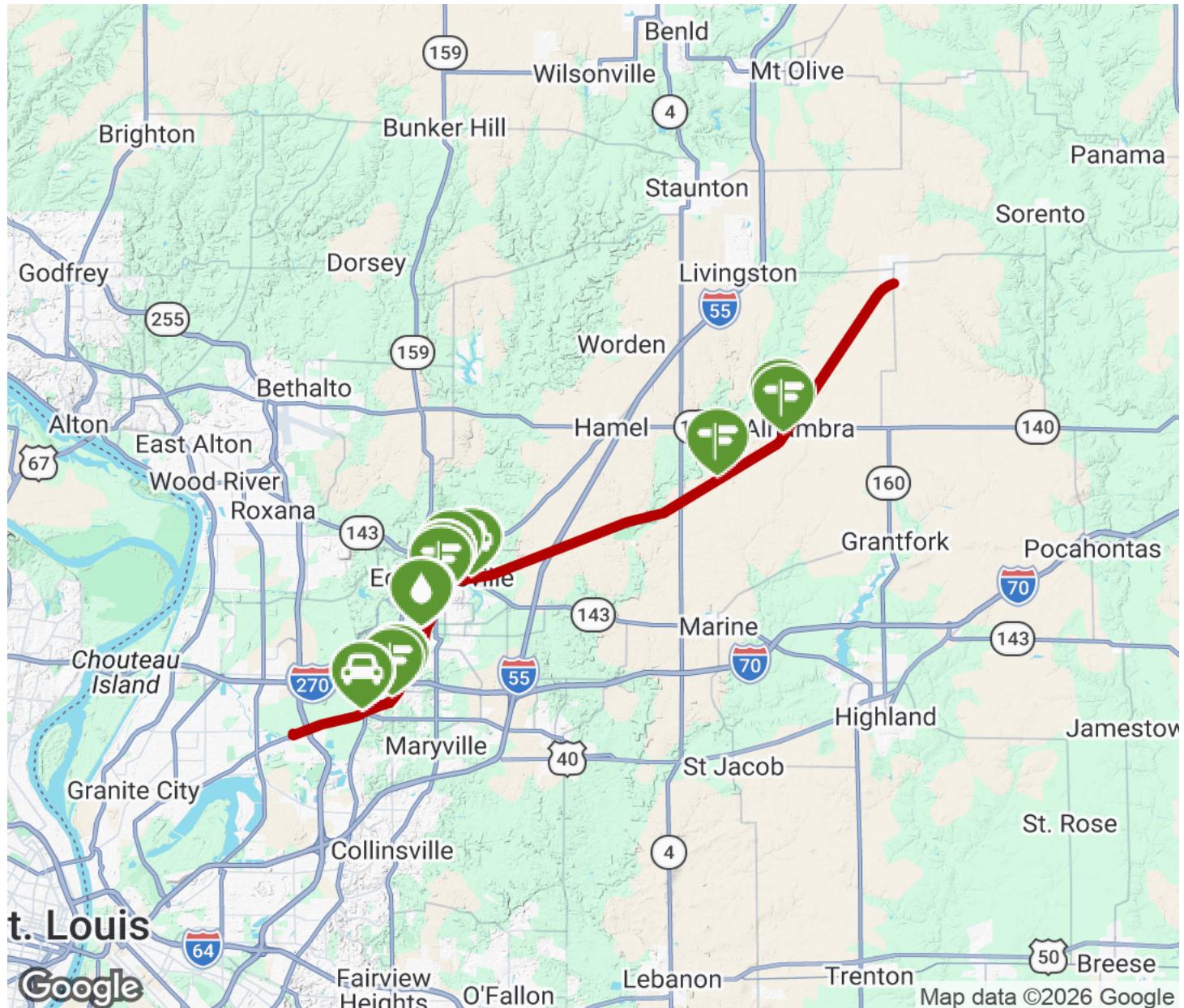
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MCT Nickel Plate Trail

Illinois



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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