



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Toonerville Rail-Trail

Vermont



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The Toonerville Rail-Trail shadows the Black River for most of its 3.2-mile length in eastern Springfield to the border with New Hampshire across the Connecticut River. The route originally carried an electric trolley that locals nicknamed the Toonerville Trolley, referencing a nationally syndicated newspaper comic that ran 1908–1955 and was adapted to early comedy film shorts. That name has survived on this paved trail long after most have forgotten the comic strip or the trolley.

The trolley's actual name was the Springfield Electric Railway, which later became the Springfield Terminal Railway. The city of Springfield funded the 4-mile interurban railway in 1896 to make connections to the railroads that passed through Charlestown, New Hampshire, across the Connecticut River. It later fell

under control of the Boston and Maine Railroad. Although the trolley stopped running in 1947 (it was the state's longest running at the time) and freight stopped using the tracks in 1984, the Springfield Terminal name still survives as a subsidiary of Pan Am Railways.

The paved multipurpose trail (also known as the Springfield Greenway) opened in 1999. It begins about a mile east of downtown on SR 11/Clinton Street in a field shared by the Springfield Farmers Market on Saturdays, June–early October. There's plenty of parking here.

The trail heads away from the highway briefly into the woods and along the banks of the Black River—a gradual downhill experience. There are plenty of opportunities to stop and gaze at the river and watch for waterfowl, including kingfishers, blue herons, and copious duck species, fishing for their food. The river's falls in downtown Springfield fed the mill boom in the 1800s and enticed companies to relocate here. One of those, Jones & Lamson Machine Co., became a world-renowned toolmaker. Its inventions were spun off into new companies, and the area became an early-20th-century tech boom center known as Precision Valley.

A cascading waterfall is visible about 1.2 miles after the trailhead, where a small tributary joins the main channel; at certain times, the falls project rainbows of light, providing copious photo opportunities. About 0.2 mile later, the trail crosses the river on Gould's Mill Bridge. A 0.4-mile side trip down Perley Gordon Road right before the bridge visits the Eureka Schoolhouse; completed in 1790, it's the state's oldest surviving one-room schoolhouse. Crews moved it here in 1968 from its original location.

Crossing the bridge, the trail route detours onto lightly trafficked Paddock Road for 0.7 mile. The path returns on the right side of the road and then goes beneath SR 11. In the final mile, the trail runs alongside SR 11, crosses US 5, passes a truck stop, goes beneath I-91, and then stops at a Vermont



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States: Vermont

Counties: Windsor

Length: 3.2miles

Trail end points: Clinton St./SR 11 and Sioux Dr.
to Charlestown Rd. at Connecticut River Rd.
(Springfield)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike,Inline

Skating,Fishing,Wheelchair

Accessible,Walking,Cross Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

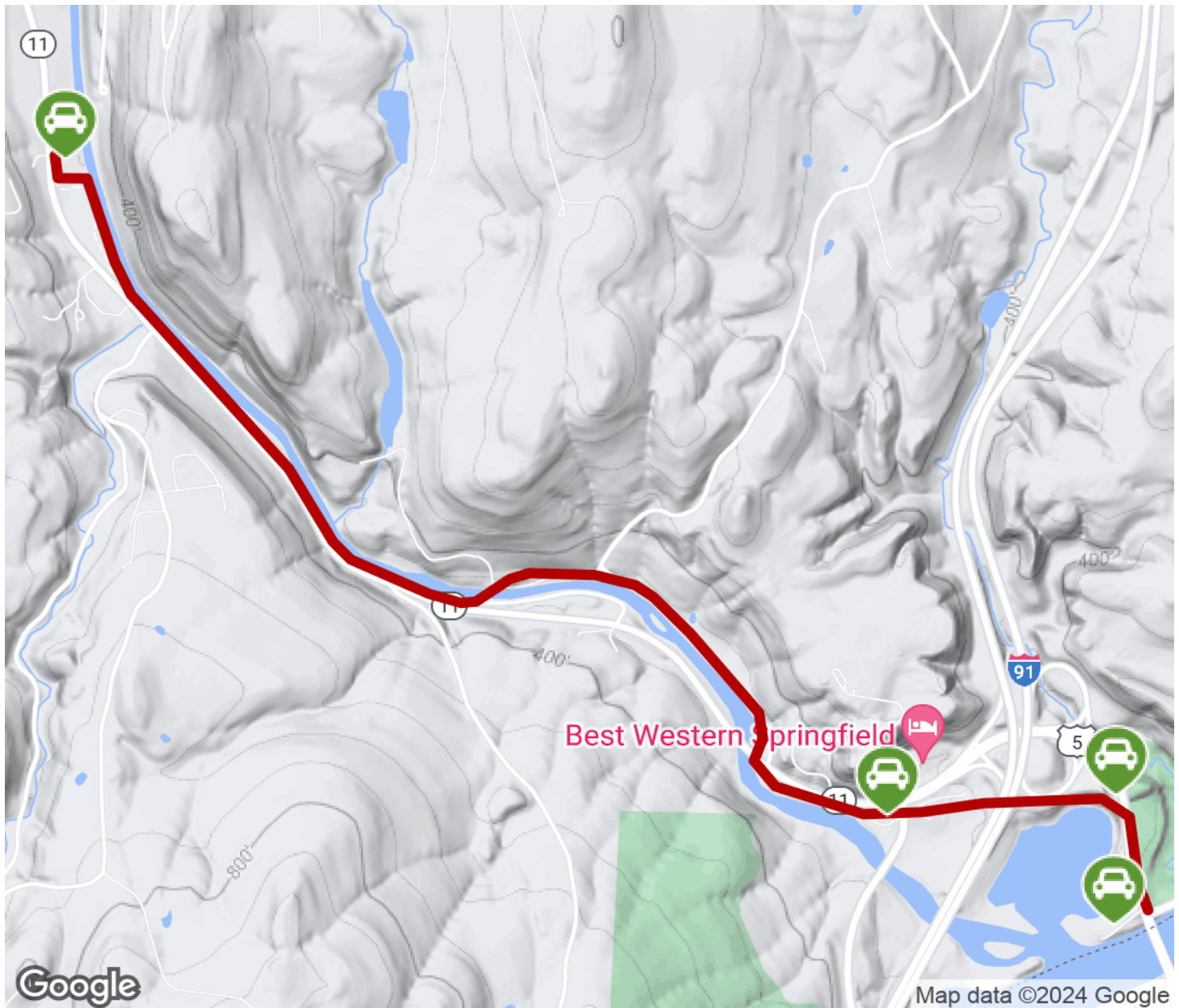
To reach the Springfield trailhead from I-91, take Exit 7 onto SR 11/Charlestown Road toward Springfield. Go 2.5 miles on SR 11 W/Charlestown Road (Charlestown Road becomes Clinton St.), and turn right into a parking lot at Robert S. Jones Industrial Center.

To reach the Hoyts Landing trailhead from I-91, take Exit 7 onto US 5 toward Charlestown. Go about 0.3 mile on US 5 N/SR 11 E, and turn right onto Youngs Road; immediately look for parking on the right.



Toonerville Rail-Trail

Vermont



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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