



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Chicago  
Lakefront  
Trail**  
*Illinois*



# Chicago Lakefront Trail

Illinois

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fore you enter Grant Park in downtown Chicago. You have reached the center of the city—and you can certainly tell! Tourists and locals flock to this portion of the trail, which provides direct access to Navy Pier, a former navy center that now maintains restaurants, shops, and carnival rides.

As you continue, you'll find yourself surrounded by Lincoln Park, which is home to a zoo, conservatory, and nature museum. To your right, you'll see one of Chicago's most popular beaches, North Avenue Beach, which lines the lake. A few miles farther north, you'll pass a couple more beaches—Montrose Beach and Foster Beach—and your ride will end as you hit Kathy Osterman Beach.

Throughout the trail, you'll find ample amenities, such as restrooms, water fountains, and concessions. Do be wary of traffic as you near the center of downtown; there are a number of intersections to cross, as well as increased foot and bike traffic. And don't forget your bike lock if you plan to stop at any of the numerous attractions along the way, and, of course, bring your camera.

The Chicago Lakefront Trail is aptly named; it spans 19 miles along the shore of Lake Michigan, going right through downtown Chicago and passing many cultural and tourist attractions throughout the city.

The trail starts at the south end of the South Shore Cultural Center, about 9.5 miles south of downtown Chicago. You begin your ride through Jackson Park and soon pass the Museum of Science and Industry and Promontory Point, a lovely peninsula that provides your first views of the skyline.

You'll pedal through Burnham Park, which maintains a few nature sanctuaries and harbors. A bit farther north, you'll catch a few more interesting sights, such as Soldier Field, Adler Planetarium, and Shedd Aquarium, just be-



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**States:** Illinois

**Counties:** Cook

Length: 19miles

**Trail end points:** E. 71st. St. and S. South Shore Dr. (US 41) to W. Ardmore Ave. and N. Sheridan Road (Chicago)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt, Concrete

**Trail category:** Greenway/Non-RT

**Trail activities:** Bike, Inline

Skating, Wheelchair Accessible, Walking

## Parking & Trail Access

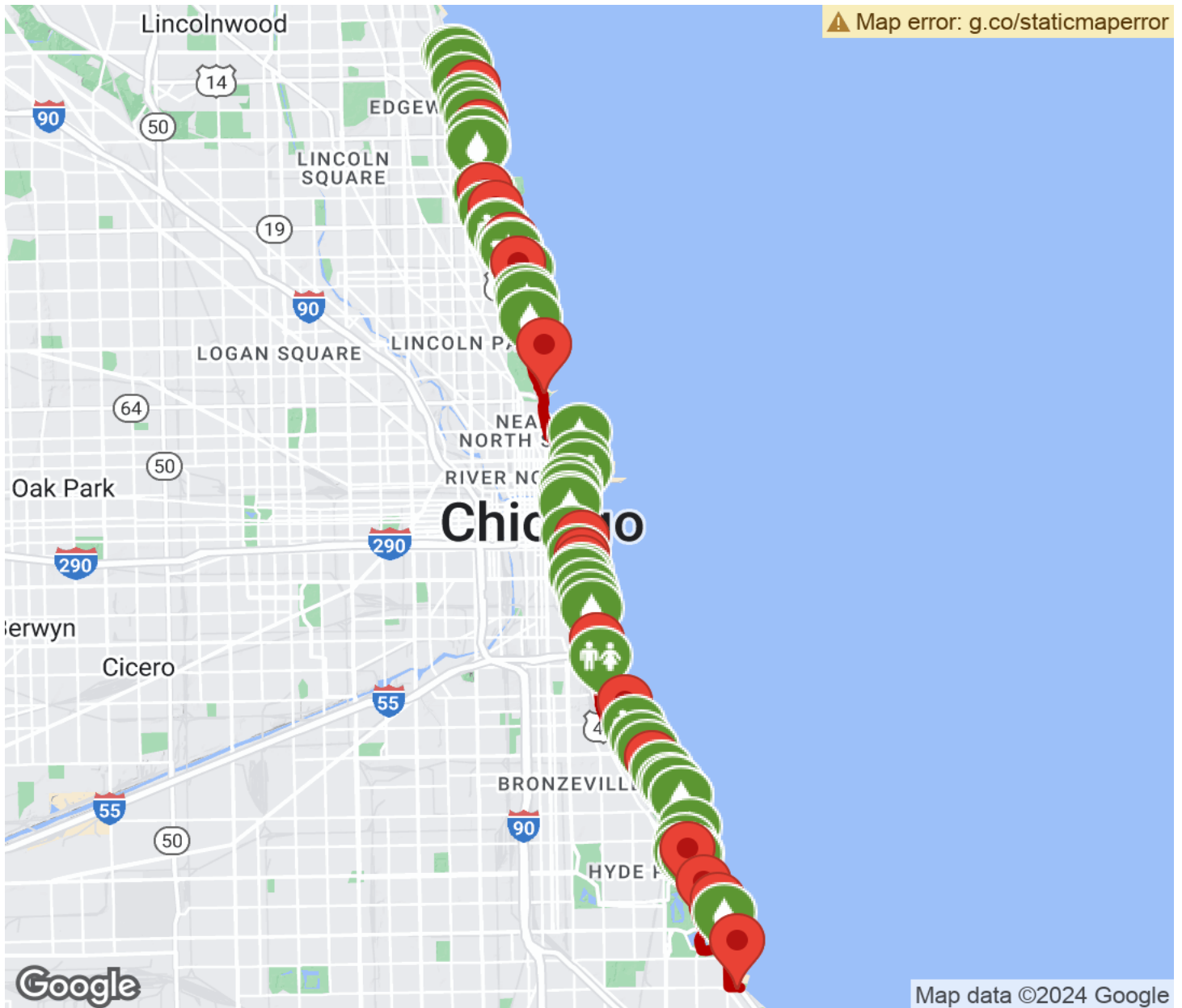
To access the southern trailhead, take I-55 N to US 41 S/S. Lake Shore Dr. near mile marker 293. Merge onto US 41 S, and go 5.3 miles. Use the left two lanes to turn left onto E. Marquette Dr., which you'll follow 0.5 mile. This will pop you onto S. South Shore Dr. Continue 0.5 mile and use the left two lanes to turn left onto E. 71st St. The trailhead will be on the left, along the wall of the South Shore Cultural Center. Look for street parking in this neighborhood.

To access the northern trailhead, take I-55 N to US 41 N/S. Lake Shore Dr. near mile marker 293. Merge onto US 41 N, and go 9.9 miles. Turn right onto N. Sheridan Road and in 0.1 mile turn right at the first cross street onto W. Ardmore Ave. You will see signage for the trailhead; look for street parking in this neighborhood.



# Chicago Lakefront Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



**TrailLink**  
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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