



2026

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Chicago
Lakefront
Trail**
Illinois



Chicago Lakefront Trail

Illinois

The Chicago Lakefront Trail is aptly named; it spans 19 miles along the shore of Lake Michigan, going right through downtown Chicago



trail users will catch a few more interesting sights, such as Soldier Field, Adler Planetarium, and Shedd Aquarium, just before entering Grant Park in downtown Chicago. Then the trail reaches the center of the city—and trail users 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 the trail continues, trail users will find themselves surrounded by Lincoln Park, which is home to a zoo, conservatory, and nature museum. To the right is one of Chicago's most popular beaches, North Avenue Beach, which lines the lake. A few miles farther north are a couple more beaches—Montrose Beach and Foster Beach—and the trail will end at Kathy Osterman Beach.

Throughout the trail, there are ample amenities, such as restrooms, water fountains, and concessions. Do be wary of traffic near the center of downtown; there are a number of intersections to cross, as well as increased foot and bike traffic.

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

About the Route

The trail leaves off from the south end of the South Shore Cultural Center, about 9.5 miles south of downtown Chicago. The trail runs through Jackson Park and soon passes the Museum of Science and Industry and Promontory Point, a lovely peninsula that provides the first views of the skyline.

The trail goes through Burnham Park, which maintains a few nature sanctuaries and harbors. A bit farther north,



Chicago Lakefront Trail

Illinois

States: Illinois

Counties: Cook

Length: 19miles

Trail end points: Kathy Osterman Beach (Edgewater) to South Shore Beach (South Shore)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Concrete

Trail category: Greenway/Non-RT

Trail activities: Bike, Inline

Skating, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible

Parking & Trail Access

The Chicago Lakefront Trail runs between Kathy Osterman Beach (Edgewater), and South Shore Beach (South Shore).

Parking is available at:

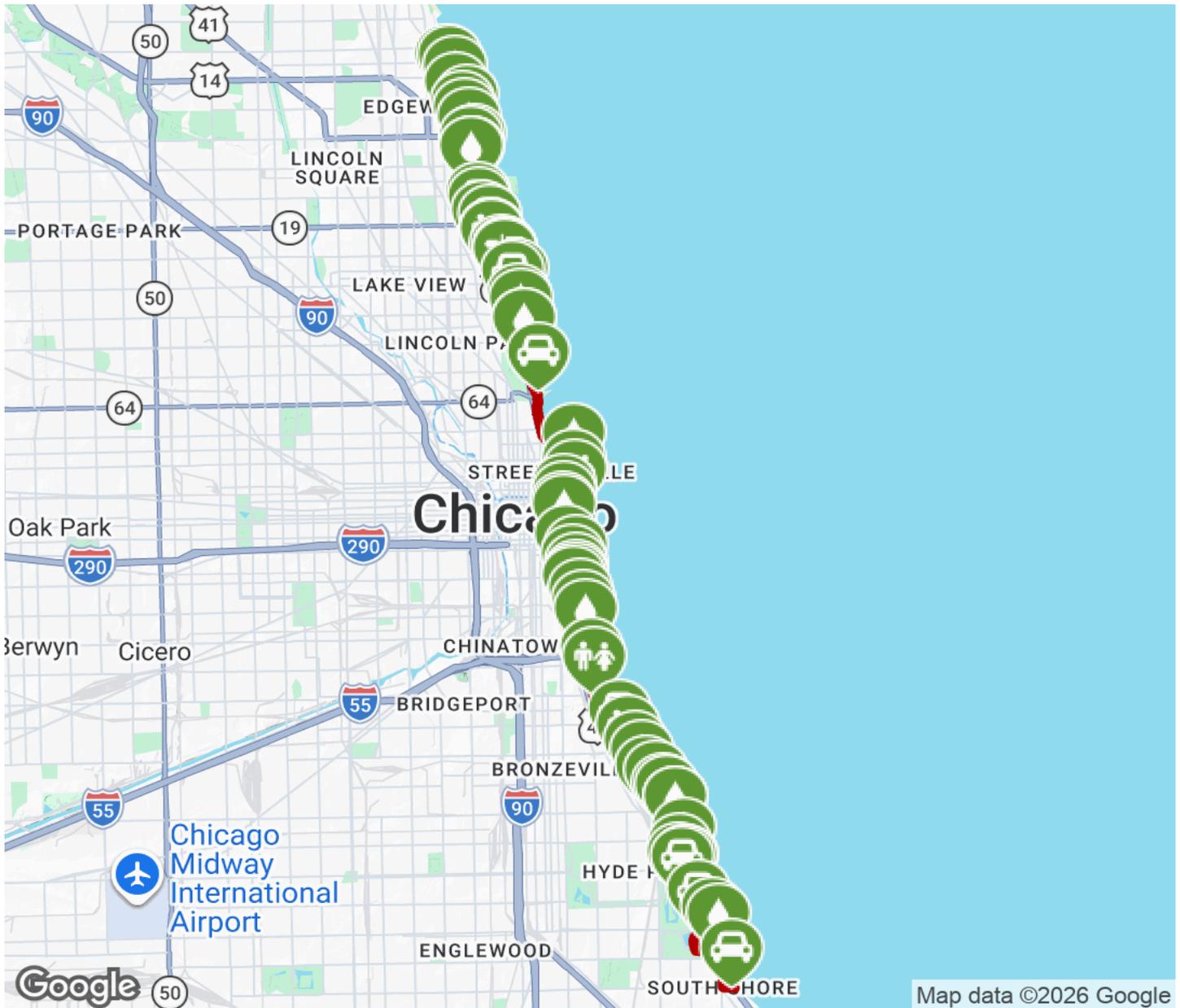
- 7059 S South Shore Dr (Chicago)
- N Sheridan Rd (Chicago)
- 100 W Addison Dr (Chicago)

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



Chicago Lakefront Trail

Illinois



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

TrailLink.com