



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



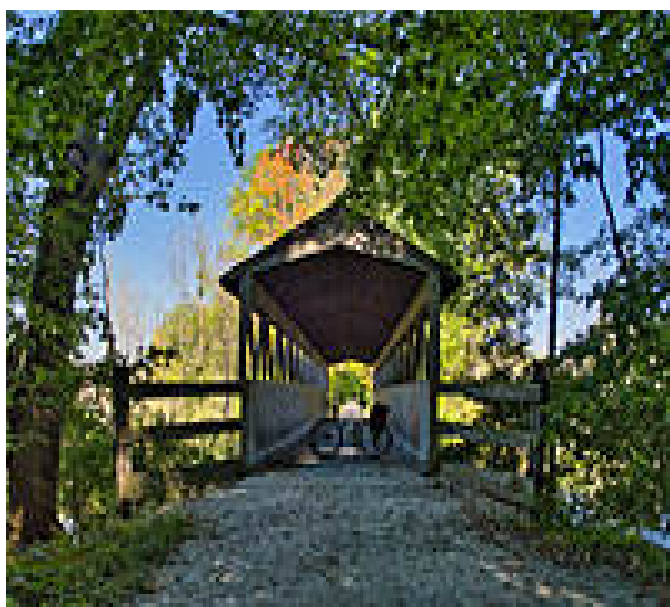
**Kal-Haven
Trail State
Park**
Michigan



Kal-Haven Trail State Park

Michigan

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More than a half-dozen old railroad towns between Kalamazoo and South Haven offer rest and replenishment to travelers using the Kal-Haven Trail. The 34-mile crushed-limestone rail-trail links these towns as it rolls across the bucolic landscape of southwestern Michigan, from the outskirts of the bustling city to the resort town on Lake Michigan.

The trail follows the rail bed laid down in 1870 for the Kalamazoo & South Haven Railroad, which was almost immediately purchased by the Michigan Central Railroad. The New York Central Railroad took over the line in 1950 and ran trains on it until a 1968 merger to create the Penn Central led to the line becoming disused in 1970.

Opened in 1991, the trail is one of the oldest conversions in

Michigan. Old depots serve as trailside visitor centers in Bloomingdale and South Haven, and an old red caboose offers trailhead services on the outskirts of Kalamazoo. The majority of the route is crushed slag and limestone and slopes gently down toward the lake; note that while the trail can accommodate road bikes, the crushed stone may prove challenging in a few sections.

Beginning on the outskirts of Kalamazoo, where the trail meets the western endpoint for the [Kalamazoo River Valley Trail](#), you'll pass through 7 miles of tree shade before entering the open fields of Mentha. Almost nothing remains of the old Mentha Plantation, which built this area's reputation for producing the world's finest peppermint oil in the early 20th century.

You'll pass the south edge of Gobles, which has services, before you arrive at the restored Bloomingdale Depot that houses a museum filled with railroad and local history at about mile 18. An adjacent bridle trail starts about 5 miles past Bloomingdale, at the trail intersection with 52½ Street, and runs for 7.5 miles to 68th Street, a mile beyond the town of Kibbie.

Here, the blueberry industry is going strong. Look for signs for "pick yourself" blueberry farms around Grand Junction and west to South Haven, which hosts the annual National Blueberry Festival in August. Just 2 miles past Grand Junction, you'll cross the Camelback Bridge, named for its unique midspan hump that was a structural support common in the 1920s.

Another bridge, this one covered, about 9 miles past Grand Junction signals that you are nearing the end of the trail. Head uphill to the South Haven staging area alongside the Black River. A bike route leads into town where you can see the South Pier Lighthouse, dating back to the early 1870s, standing over the mouth of the Black River. To either side of the river, North Beach and South Beach offer fun places to



Kal-Haven Trail State Park

Michigan

States: Michigan

Counties: Kalamazoo, Van Buren

Length: 34 miles

Trail end points: Kalamazoo River Valley Trail
(Kalamazoo) to Bailey Ave (South Haven)

Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Wheelchair

Accessible, Snowmobiling, Walking, Cross

Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

To reach the Kalamazoo trailhead from I-94, take Exit 74B for US 131 N./Bus. Loop I-94 toward Kalamazoo/Grand Rapids. Merge onto US 131 N./Bus. Loop I-94 E., and continue for 2 miles. Continue on US 131 N. for another 2.4 miles, and then take Exit 38B for MI 43 W. toward South Haven. Merge onto MI 43. Turn right onto 10th St. N., and then go 2.1 miles. Turn left into the trailhead and parking area.

To reach the South Haven trailhead from I-196, take Exit 20 onto Phoenix St., heading west. Go 0.4 mile, and turn right onto Blue Star Hwy. Go 0.5 mile, and turn left onto E. Wells St./Second Ave. After 0.3 mile, turn right on N. Bailey Ave., the first street off the traffic circle. Go north about 300 feet and turn right into the trailhead parking lot.



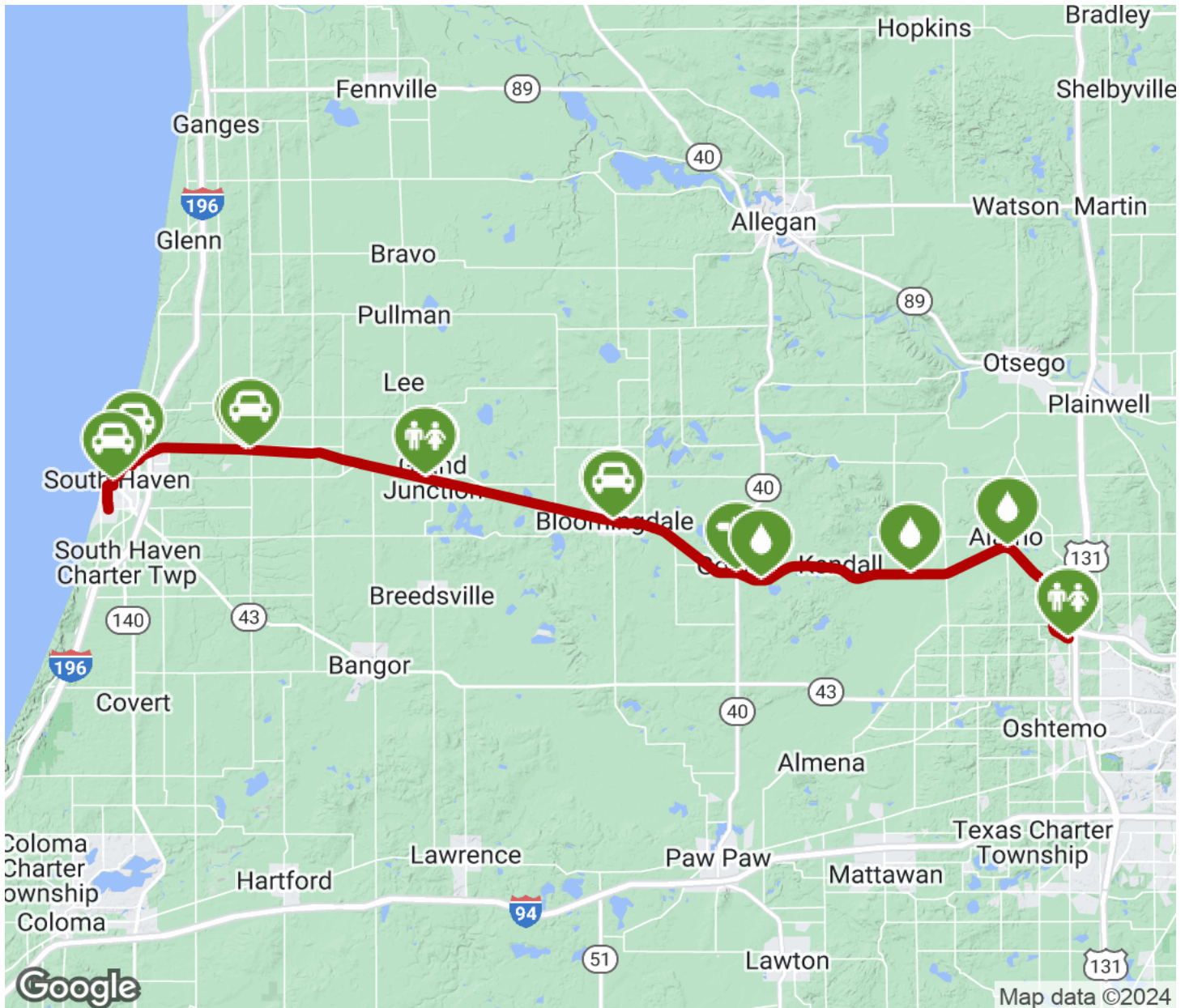
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Kal-Haven Trail State Park

Michigan



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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