



Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail

The story of the 22-mile Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail began in 2006, when Swedish conglomerate, Electrolux, closed down the world's largest refrigerator factory in Greenville and moved operations to Juarez, Mexico. The Mid Michigan Railroad lost its biggest and only customer on the Lowell to Greenville rail line and abandoned the rail corridor. On September 22, 2010, a broad coalition of government and non-profit organizations purchased the entire length of abandoned railway for \$1.3 million for recreational use.

The first 2.28-mile section of trail was built during the summer of 2014 and dedicated on August 20. This section from the M-44 bridge to Long Lake Road through the City of Belding crosses three bridges over the Flat River. It's paved with asphalt through town and surfaced with finely screened and compacted limestone north of the northern river crossing.

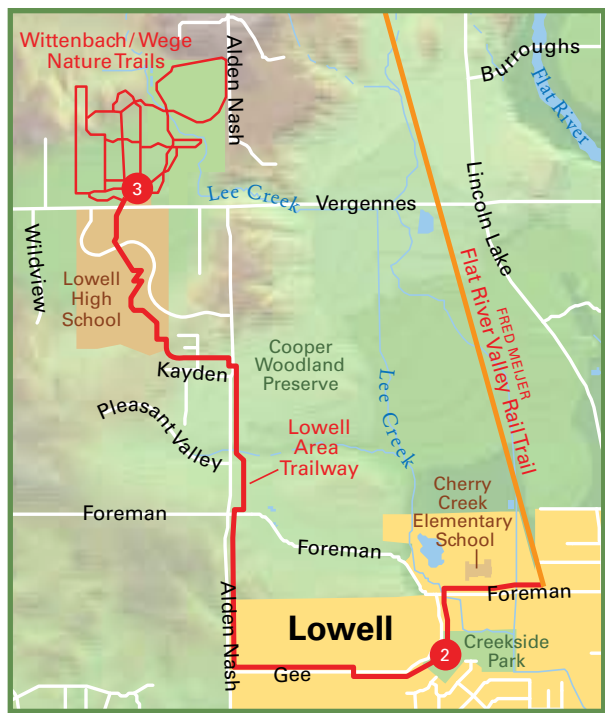
Local trail developers and the Michigan DNR are now raising funds to complete the rest of the rail trail north and south of Belding. They hope to break ground during the spring of 2017. When completed, the trail will be surfaced with finely screened and compacted limestone through the rural and natural areas and paved with asphalt through the village of Smyrna and City of Lowell. The Lowell Area Recreation Authority is currently developing a route to connect the Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail to the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail through the City of Lowell. The current trail surface is mostly grass and gravel and railroad ballast, and a popular day ride for "fat tire" bike riders.



Scenic overlook on the Lowell Area Trailway.

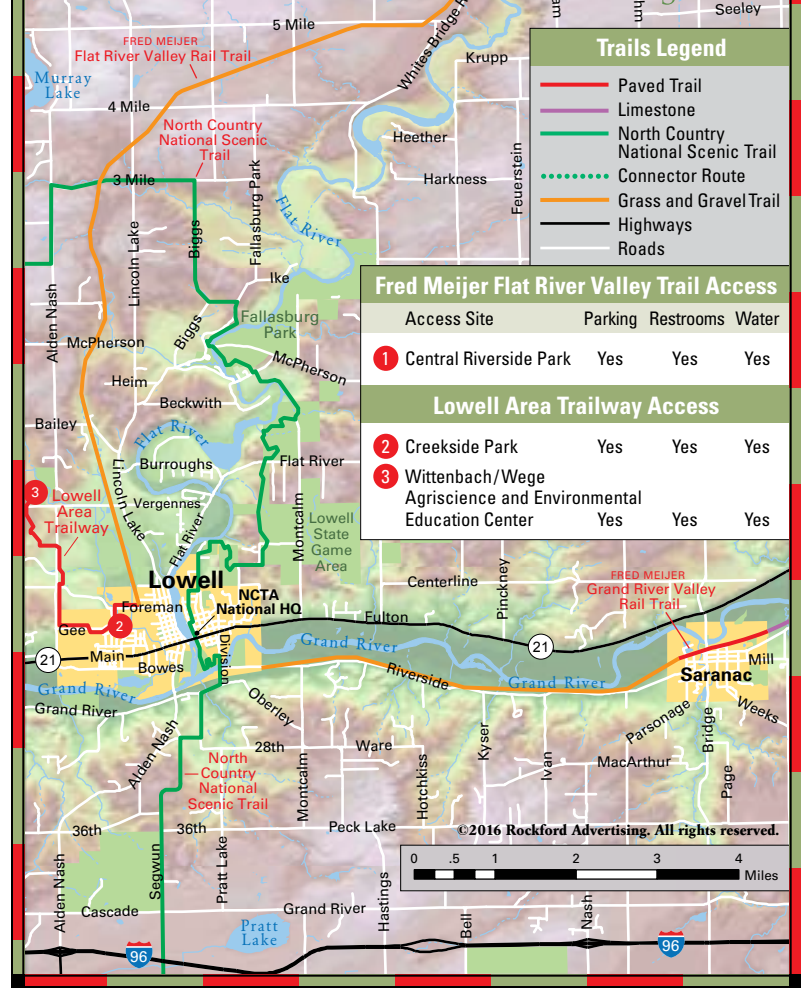


The trail crosses three bridges over the Flat River in Belding.



Lowell Area Trailway

The 2.5-mile Lowell Area Trailway is a 10-foot-wide, paved community pathway that connects the Wittenbach/Wege Agriscience and Environmental Education Center, Lowell High School, Cooper Woodland Preserve, Creekside Park and Cherry Creek Elementary School to the Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail in Lowell. At the northern end of the trail, you can explore a network of nearly 4 miles of nature trails at the Wittenbach/Wege Agriscience and Environmental Education Center.



Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail • Lowell Area Trailway