



*The Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers, Inc. (MARP) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation established in 1973 to improve passenger train service, travel conditions for passengers, and to work for the preservation of historic rail stations.*

*Monthly meetings are held at locations around the state. Check the website for dates and venues. The public is invited to attend.*

### MARP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**2014-2016**

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Larry Krieg         | Chair                                   |
| Steve Vagnozzi      | Vice-Chair                              |
| Jeanie Merckel      | Treasurer                               |
| Kay Chase           | Acting Secretary                        |
| John Langdon        | Governmental/Public Affairs Coordinator |
| Chuck Merckel       | Membership Coordinator                  |
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| Adam Tauno Williams | Meetings Coordinator                    |
| Don Monteith        | Northern Region Chair                   |
| Robert Patterson    | Detroit/Metro Region Chair              |
| Warren Fritz        | West Region Chair                       |
| Steve Vagnozzi      | East/Central Region Chair               |

*The Michigan Passenger Editor and Webmaster, Larry Sobczak*  
*ON TRACK Editor, Kay Chase*

### 2016 MEETINGS

- 16 January** – REO Town Depot (former Grand Trunk Depot), Lansing
- February** – Cancelled
- 12 March** – Cleary’s Pub, Howell
- 16 April** – New Buffalo Library
- May** – Amtrak Train Days
- 11 June** – Amtrak Station, Dearborn
- July** – Executive Committee
- August** – tentative Marquette, in conjunction with 4<sup>th</sup> Annual MI Rail Conf
- 24 September** – Annual Meeting at Durand Union Station
- 8 October** – Dowagiac
- November** – TBA
- December** – Executive Committee

Visit [www.marp.org](http://www.marp.org)  
Email [marprail@yahoo.com](mailto:marprail@yahoo.com)

## Coast-to-Coast Study Finds 110-mph Passenger Trains Could Be Profitable

An annual operating surplus of \$14 million could be realized with eight daily round trips at 110 mph serving the Detroit to Lansing route via Wayne, Ann Arbor and Jackson. This route is also projected to have the highest potential ridership among the three routes recommended for further study in the **Coast-to-Coast Passenger Rail Ridership and Cost Estimate Study** recently released to the public. The study was undertaken as a first step toward possible restoration of passenger train service connecting Michigan’s three largest population centers: Detroit, Lansing and Grand Rapids.

Prior to 1971, when Amtrak assumed responsibility for the nation’s rail passenger service, Detroit-Lansing-Grand Rapids was an active route. Lansing, for example, had 10 daily passenger trains – four between Detroit and Grand Rapids and six between Chicago, Lansing and Detroit/Port Huron. In 2011, the **Michigan State Rail Plan** included a recommendation that the route be considered for restoration.

The study recommends three possible routes for further study, all three of which continue west from Lansing to Grand Rapids and Holland.

- Route 1: Detroit to Lansing via Wayne, Ann Arbor and Jackson
- Route 2: Detroit to Lansing via Wayne, Ann Arbor and Howell
- Route 3: Detroit to Lansing via Wayne and Plymouth

A future, more detailed assessment is needed to identify a preferred route and the location of stations.

As defined in the present study, Route 1 has the highest potential ridership, while Route 2 has the greatest potential return on investment. Service on each of the three routes was evaluated for conventional equipment operating at 79 mph and for advanced equipment capable of operating at speeds up to 110 mph. Not surprisingly, the study finds that the higher-frequency, faster-service options generate the greatest ridership and potential to provide an operating surplus.

*(C2C continues on next page)*



### MARP Member Meeting

**Saturday, March 12**

**10:0 am – Noon**

**Cleary’s Pub**

113 S Main Street, Howell MI 48118

**Map & Directions**

Michael Benham will give an update on the proposed WALLY Commuter train between Howell and Ann Arbor. Liz Treutel Callin will report on results of the recently completed “Coast-to-Coast” ridership and revenue study.

Details on the website [www.marp.org](http://www.marp.org) Or send email to [marprail@yahoo.com](mailto:marprail@yahoo.com).

## Agreement between Canada and U.S. May Ease Border Crossings for Passenger Trains

A bill sponsored by Vermont's Sen. Patrick Leahy aims to ease border crossings for train passengers traveling between the U.S. and Canada. The state of Vermont is actively pursuing extension of the *Vermont* route north to St. Albans and then on to Montreal. At the same time, the state of New York would like to increase ridership on the *Maple Leaf* and *Adirondack* routes which cross the border at Buffalo and Rouse's Point, respectively.

Michigan has had no train service into Canada since delays due to security concerns in the wake of 9-11 made such trips untenable. In recent years, there has been considerable interest in restoring this service, with Governor Snyder expressing strong support for the idea in his keynote address to the Michigan Rail Summit in 2011.

MARP members will have an opportunity to learn more about the implications of this legislation, and the work of the **Eastern Border Transportation Coalition** that set the stage for these initiatives. The EBTC will host a 2-day Conference and Workshop on April 19 and 20 at the SEMCOG offices in Detroit. Day 2 will focus on rail passenger preclearance status and issues

Sen. Leahy's bill—**S.2612**—is a step toward creating a prescreening program similar to the pre-clearance of airline passengers that occurs at Montreal and other Canadian airports. It follows the March 2015 announcement of the **Agreement on Land, Rail, Marine and Air Transportation Preclearance** between the U.S. and Canada that provides the legal framework to allow each inspection agency to perform its duties in the other country and would allow for consideration of requests for new preclearance locations across all modes.

### Current Amtrak Trains Crossing the Border

|                   | Total Ridership (2013) | Passenger Border Crossings | % Passengers Crossing Border |
|-------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Adirondack</i> | 133,008                | 90,374                     | 67.9 %                       |
| <i>Maple Leaf</i> | 406,973                | 36,787                     | 9.0 %                        |
| <i>Cascades</i>   | 811,692                | 142,697                    | 17.6 %                       |

Would you like to see a high-speed rail line run from Ontario to Chicago or Detroit?

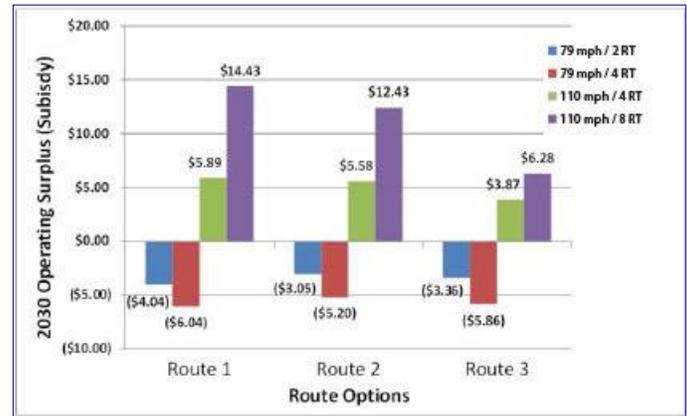
Yes  76% (268 votes)  
No  24% (85 votes)

Total Votes: 353 Poll conducted week of 2/22/2016 [Source](#)

(C2C continued from previous page)

At 79 mph, increasing train frequency from 2 to 4 trains per day in each direction almost doubles ridership, while at 110 mph, increasing train frequency from 4 to 8 trains per day in each direction increases demand by 30-40 percent. The impact of higher speed is to double ridership as the train service becomes more competitive with the automobile.

This chart illustrates the potential operating surpluses for the various scenarios, taking into account anticipated ridership levels, construction costs, as well as frequency and speed of service.



The study was prepared by Transportation Economics & Management Systems, Inc. (TEMS) and managed by the Michigan Environmental Council. The Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority served as the grant fiduciary. MARP executive committee members Larry Krieg and John Langdon served on the 21 member steering committee, along with officials from Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority, Ann Arbor DDA, Grand Valley Metro Council, Macatawa Coordinating Council, MDOT, SEMCOG, SE Michigan Regional Transit Authority, The Right Place, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, Michigan Environmental Council, Michigan Railroads Association, and Midwest Strategy Group.

Federal funding for the study was supplemented with funding from Ann Arbor DDA, Cascade Charter Township, City of Plymouth, Experience Grand Rapids, Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau, Holland Convention & Visitors Bureau, Ingham County Economic Development Corporation, Livonia Chamber of Commerce, Macatawa Area Coordinating Council, Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce, and Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce.

Next steps include completion of a full feasibility study, development of an implementation plan and a review of public-private partnership options.

[Download the executive summary](#)

[Download the full report](#)

[Sign-on as a supporter](#)

## MIDWEST *Winter Warm Up* SALE

20% off Michigan Amtrak Travel  
Good for travel through March 31  
[Click here to purchase your train ticket](#)  
For a list of winter events in  
Michigan cities along Amtrak routes  
[Click Here](#)

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### Midwest High Speed Rail Annual Spring Meeting

Saturday April 2, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm  
IBEW Local 134 Headquarters  
600 W Washington Blvd, Chicago IL 0661

The program includes high-speed rail in Japan, Midwest Amtrak Services, and the proposed O'Hare Express Train. For more information and to register [click here](#). Lunch is included in your registration fee.

### WISARP Spring Meeting

April 2, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm  
Clarion Hotel – Campus Area, Eau Claire WI  
Speakers will include Arun Rao, WisDOT Passenger Rail Implementation Manager, and Dan Krom, Director on MnDOT's Passenger Rail Office. [Register here](#).

### Eastern Border Transportation Coalition Workshop & Conference

April 19-20 SEMCOG Offices, Detroit  
Visit [ebtc.info](http://ebtc.info) to learn about the work of the coalition and to access the White Paper titled "The Importance of Efficient Canada-U.S. Border Crossings and Recommendations for Action" which will guide the workshop discussions. See article on page 2 above for more information.

## Ask Congress for A Connected America today!

The bipartisan FAST Act was passed overwhelmingly by Congress last December. Now, as Congressional appropriators consider the FY 2017 budget, NARP is urging you to [Write to Your Congressman Today!](#) to make sure this bold vision for passenger trains is adequately funded.

## A Look at Union Station's Ambitious Restoration and Redevelopment Plans

On 22 February, the Metropolitan Planning Council hosted a roundtable discussion regarding the future of Chicago's Union Station. The presentation focused not only on efforts to bolster passenger capacity, widen platforms, and improve pedestrian flow, it also highlighted a master plan for transforming the historic 1925 station into a mixed-use destination for both travelers and non-travelers alike."

This article includes [peeks at seldom seen interior spaces](#) that are planned for use, as well as photos of presently congested concourses and narrow platforms along with artist's renderings of planned improvements in these areas.

## DDOT Restores 24-Hour Service on Three Routes

The Detroit Department of Transportation has restored 24-hour service on three of its busiest routes. In late January, three Detroit bus routes regained 24-hour service: Routes #53 Woodward, #34 Gratiot and #21 Grand River. A number of [other improvements](#) are being initiated as well.

DDOT Director Dan Dirks told the Detroit Free Press that the service changes come as a direct response to customers and employees who want better night service, frequent peak-hour service and more reliable schedules.

Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan, who campaigned on a promise of better bus service, joined a very early morning run of the extended service hours, joined by a [WXYZ-TV Detroit](#) camera crew. "We won't get huge numbers off the late night shift, but we'll change a lot of lives," he said. "A big part of running a quality bus service is to drive down the unemployment rate and give people opportunity."

In other good news for metro area residents, Oakland County's SMART system and DDOT are working with the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan to jointly operate [enhanced regional express bus service](#) on Woodward and Gratiot. The proposal includes expanded bus service on Woodward (from Bricktown, near the People Mover stop, to Somerset Collection in Troy) and Gratiot (from Bricktown to the North River Park & Ride in the Mt. Clemens area). The draft proposal was presented 21 January 2016 at a meeting of the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan. Hourly service would include 13 stops and could begin in July.

## Renew Your Membership !

Pay On-Line

or

Download a Mail-In Form



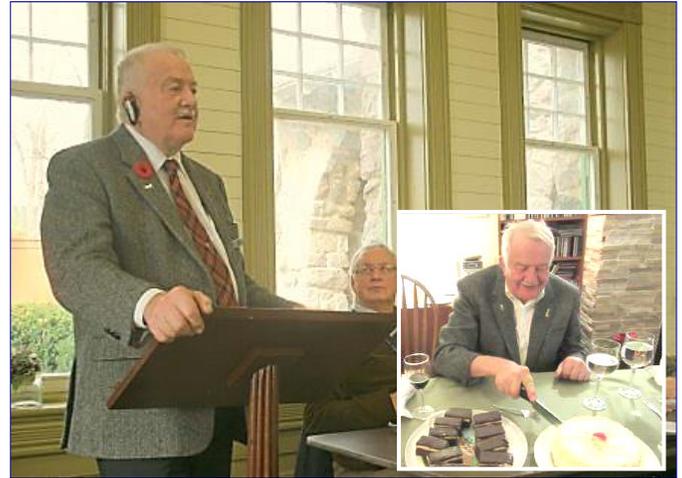
### **View from elsewhere . . .**

*“Given this is a campaign year...nothing will happen until a new administration is in town next year. The rail industry should take this time to prepare itself how to effectively deal with the entrenched interests in Congress, realizing such a tax on oil is improbable. [To] secure the attention and respect of Congress, the rail industry has to cease attacking itself and focus on its actual "enemies." For example, the Class 1's need to prioritize dispatching of Amtrak and commuter operations, and take that issue off the table, recognizing the limited attention span of Congress dealing with so many major domestic and foreign issues.”*

— Mark E. Singer, Principal at Marketing Rail Ltd., reacting to the Administration's FY 2016-17 budget proposal to impose a \$10/barrel tax on oil to fund **clean transportation programs**

*“This change to quicker customs clearance at the border south of Montréal would make it likely that the Adirondack will attract many more customers.”*

— Harry Gow, President, Transportation Action Canada, commenting on new border crossing agreement (see page 2 above)



### **Still President – After all These Years**

Harry Gow is shown in the photo above speaking at a MARP meeting in Essex, Ontario in 2011. The inset is a recent photo of Harry at an event celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Transport Action Canada which he helped found four decades ago. Harry was honored in 2010 at MARP's first-ever meeting in the Upper Peninsula for, among many other things, his pioneering work as an advocate of seamless, convenient cross-border transportation. *Photo by Rosemary Horvath*



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### **Contact Your Lawmaker**

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202-224-3121

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