



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 2016-2018

Steve Vagnozzi	Acting Chair
Open	Vice-Chair
Stewart Bolinger	Treasurer
Elizabeth Green	Secretary
John Langdon	Gov'l/Public Affairs Coordinator
Robert Tischbein	Membership Coordinator
Kay Chase	Communications Coordinator
Adam Tauno Williams	Meetings Coordinator
Open	Northern Region Chair
Robert Patterson	Detroit/Metro Region Chair
Warren Fritz	West Region Chair
Jim Wallington	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** – Howell Public Library
- 16 April** – New Buffalo Library
- 21 May** – Jackson District Library
- 11 June** – Dearborn Amtrak Station
- 9 July** – Executive Committee
- 17,18 August** – Marquette, 4th Annual MI Rail Conference
- 24 September** – Annual Meeting at Durand Union Station
- 8 October** – Dowagiac City Hall
- 12 November** – Lapeer Amtrak Station
- December** – Executive Committee

Visit www.marp.org
Email marprail@yahoo.com

SE Michigan Voters Asked to Seize the Day

Voters in Southeast Michigan will have the opportunity, when they go to the polls on November 8, to catapult their region into the 21st Century. The groundwork has been laid and it is now up to the voters to decide whether a far-sighted and ambitious plan for improving and expanding transit throughout the region will become a reality.

Getting to this point has not been easy. In 2012, after decades of failed attempts, the Michigan legislature passed legislation allowing formation of the **Regional Transit Authority** for Southeast Michigan. Start-up funding was provided. A **governing board** was appointed. A **citizens advisory committee** named. And, in 2014, **Michael Ford** was selected to head the agency. All hands set about gathering information, interacting with residents, talking with business and community leaders, and generally casting a wide net to determine the needs and desires of the region in addressing the challenges of creating a more functional, reliable, and coordinated transit system.

Hailed as offering transit that is **RAPID** • **RELIABLE** • **REGIONAL**, the **Regional Transit Plan** was released in August of 2016. Highlights of the plan include:

- new bus rapid transit routes on Woodward, Gratiot, Michigan, and Washtenaw Avenues
- additional express bus services
- new airport express service
- expanded paratransit services to help seniors and handicapped persons remain independent
- regional rail service between Ann Arbor and Detroit, beginning with 8 daily round trips by 2022

Implementation of these plans will improve connections across jurisdictional lines, connecting people to jobs in more places and improving access to education, medical facilities, arts and entertainment venues, leisure activities, grocery shopping, and other commercial activity. MDOT analysis projects that **Rapid** • **Reliable** • **Regional** transit will connect

(VOTE continues on next page)



MARP Member Meeting

Saturday, November 12

Noon – 2:30 p.m.

Lapeer Amtrak Station

78 Howard Street, Lapeer MI 48446

Map & Directions

Built by Grand Trunk Western, the Lapeer depot opened in 1906. Currently serving passengers on the *Blue Water* route, the depot was restored in 2004 by the local transit agency which owns the depot. Meeting details are on the website www.marp.org Or send email to marprail@yahoo.com.

(**VOTE** continued from previous page)

to 1.9 million existing jobs and support creation of 67,844 new jobs over the next twenty years.

What will it cost? The proposal asks for 1.2 mills for 20 years. This amounts to about \$95 per year -- less than \$8 per month -- for the average homeowner in the 4 counties.

Success at the polls will more than double the existing funding for public transit in the region, with about half the funding dedicated to improving DDOT, SMART, and AAATA bus services.

Success will mean that SE Michigan will no longer suffer from its reputation as the largest region in the country without a regional transit system.

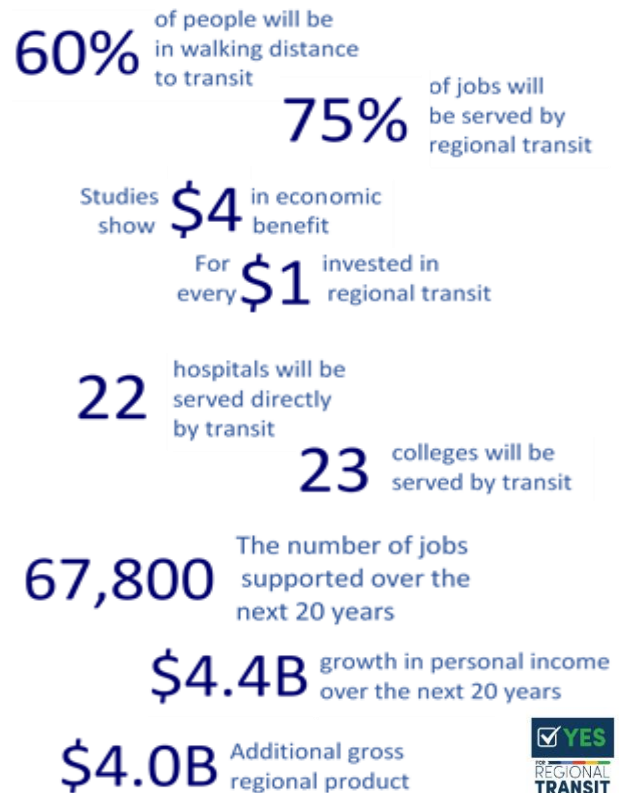
What can you do?

1. **Volunteer** to phone bank, help at an event, or distribute materials.
2. Find other volunteer activities [here](#) .
3. **Download and print FACT SHEETS** to share with friends, organizations, and business associates.
4. **Contact the campaign** if you can host a Lunch & Learn event or would like a speaker for your church group, civic organization, or place of business.
5. On Facebook, follow **Vote Yes for Regional Transit** and **Support Detroit Transit**.
6. On Twitter, follow **@YesforTransit** and **@DetroitTransit**. Then share with your friends.

TO LEARN MORE VISIT
VoteYesForRegionalTransit.com

BY THE NUMBERS

What the RTA means for Southeast Michigan



 **Vote on November 8**
Access your **SAMPLE BALLOT** [HERE](#)

Here is what voters in Wayne, Washtenaw, Oakland, and Macomb counties will see on their November 8, 2016, ballot:

A Proposal Authorizing the **Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA)** to Levy an Assessment

The proposal would authorize the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) to levy within Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties a property tax assessment:

- at a rate of 1.2 mills (\$1.20 per \$1,000 of taxable value);
- for 20 years beginning in 2016 and ending in 2035;
- that may not be increased, renewed, or used for other purposes without direct voter approval; and
- to be used upon the affirmative vote of an RTA board member from each RTA member jurisdiction for the purpose of construction and operation of a public transportation system connecting Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties, including rapid transit bus routes across county lines, specialized service for senior citizens and people with disabilities, commuter rail, airport express service, and other public transportation purposes permitted by law, consistent with RTA bylaws and subject to the limitations of the Regional Transit Authority Act.

If this new additional assessment is approved and levied, revenue will be disbursed to the RTA. It is estimated that \$160,907,285 will be collected in the first year.

Should this assessment be approved?

YES/NO

MARP Elects Officers at Annual Meeting

MARP members, meeting at Durand Union Station on September 24, unanimously approved the 2016-18 slate of officers presented by the nominating committee. Steve Vagnozzi, Okemos MI, currently serving as Vice-Chair, will assume full duties as Chair following his retirement at the end of the year. Elizabeth Green, Lawrence MI, appointed Secretary by the executive committee in July to fill the existing vacancy, was approved by the membership for the 2016-18 term. Robert Tischbein, Utica MI, will fill the vacant At-Large Executive Committee position. Re-elected to fill the other three At-Large positions are John Langdon, Holland MI, Adam Tauno Williams, Grand Rapids MI, and Kay Chase, Kalamazoo MI. Re-elected to chair the West, East-Central, and Metro-Detroit regions, respectively, are Warren Fritz, Kalamazoo MI, Jim Wallington, Perry MI, and Robert Patterson, Detroit MI.

Stewart Bolinger, East Lansing MI, was named Treasurer by the Executive Committee in July. This is an appointed position. Stewart comes to MARP following a career as an internal auditor, working in both the public and private sectors. He served fifteen years with the Port of Oakland, San Mateo County, and Bay Area Rapid Transit in the San Francisco area.

Clark Charnetski and Steve Sobel were thanked for serving on the nominating committee.

In other business, the membership approved two changes to Article VII of the Bylaws. The Executive Committee, meeting July 9, 2016, had voted to recommend these changes in order to reflect actual practice over the past several years. The changes make appointment of an Executive Director optional rather than mandatory and remove the phrase “serve without compensation” in order to leave open the option of compensation should the organization choose to appoint and compensate an Executive Director in the future.

The membership also approved a resolution in support of **Citizens for Connecting our Communities** which is working for passage of the November ballot issue asking voters in Southeast Michigan to approve funding to implement the **Regional Transit Plan**. Find more information at VoteYesForRegionalTransit.com.


Mask-Wa-Oo-Ta-Ban
Bring Back Algoma's Passenger Train
 Town Hall Meeting

Where: Russ Ramsay Room, City Hall, Sault Ste. Marie
When: Tuesday, Nov 1, 2016 7:00 pm

Rally to send a message to the Federal Government that we **NEED** the passenger train back on track **NOW**

For more information contact Linda Savory Gordon
 P: 705-949-2301 ext. 4320 E: linda.savory-gordon@algomau.ca

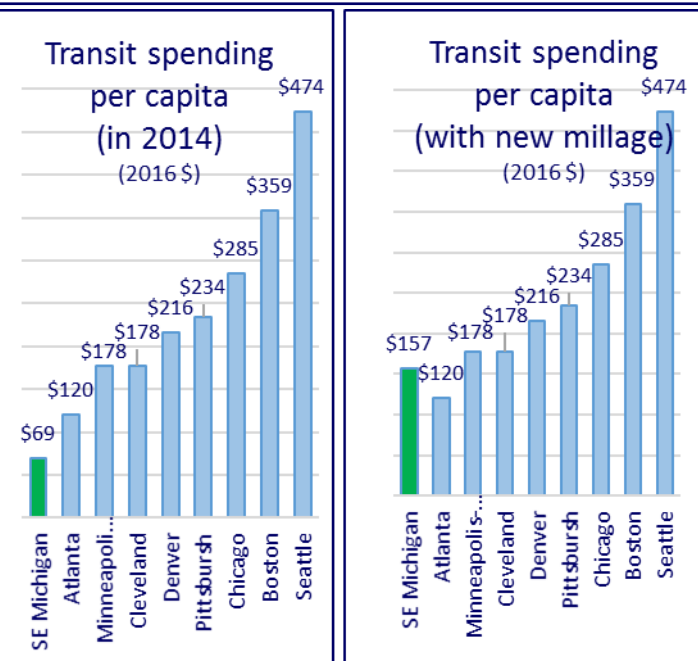

Organized by: Algoma Passenger Train Working Group



CLICK HERE
To Take Action

How Does Southeast Michigan Stack Up?

Southeast Michigan ranks last in per capita transit spending when compared with eight peer regions around the country. With passage of the RTA proposal on the November ballot, per capita spending will more than double. As stated in the Regional Master Transit Plan, the increased investment will “[go] a long way toward meeting the needs of a region striving for greater economic resilience and growth.”

An expanded pet carry-on program has brought 10,000 pets on board Amtrak trains since October 2015, and generated \$1.2 million in pet fees and passenger revenues.

View from elsewhere . . .

“A High Speed Rail network in the Great Lakes Region would connect the economic hubs of Chicago and Toronto, putting 50 million people within three hours of each other. 80% of Midwesterners live within 25 miles of a railroad.”

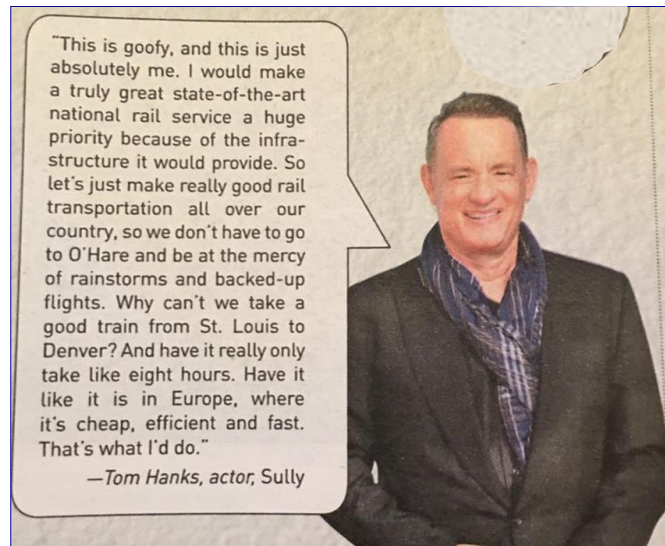
The above is from the abstract of a 2016 course offering at the Illinois Institute of Technology, College of Architecture. Robert Bracken, a senior urban designer in the Chicago office of Skidmore Owings and Merrill, co-led this visionary **Cloud Studio**. Mr. Bracken will be the featured speaker at a Brown Bag Luncheon sponsored by the Midwest High Speed Rail Association.

Thoughts on a Chicago-Detroit-Toronto High-Speed Line

When: November 9, 11:30AM - 1:00PM

Where: DePaul University, 14 East Jackson Blvd,
16th Floor - Dublin Room, Chicago, IL

CLICK HERE to register for this FREE event



“This is goofy, and this is just absolutely me. I would make a truly great state-of-the-art national rail service a huge priority because of the infrastructure it would provide. So let’s just make really good rail transportation all over our country, so we don’t have to go to O’Hare and be at the mercy of rainstorms and backed-up flights. Why can’t we take a good train from St. Louis to Denver? And have it really only take like eight hours. Have it like it is in Europe, where it’s cheap, efficient and fast. That’s what I’d do.”

—Tom Hanks, actor, Sully

“If I Were President . . .”

When Parade Magazine asked various celebrities this question, Tom Hanks warmed the hearts of train advocates with his answer. But what about the actual candidates? Hillary Clinton has provided a detailed **infrastructure plan**. Donald Trump has laid out no specific plan, but **has said** we need greater federal investment in mass transit and high-speed trains.



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Contact Your Lawmaker

Congressional Switchboard
202-224-3121

Sen. Debbie Stabenow

Sen. Gary Peters

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