



ON TRACK

The E-Bulletin of the Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers

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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

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

2017 MEETINGS

- 14 January** – REO Town Depot (former Grand Trunk Depot), Lansing
- 18 February** – 1st Methodist Church, Kalamazoo
- 18 March** – Clinton Northern Railway Museum, St. Johns
- 22 April** – Grand Trunk Pub, Detroit
- 13 May** – Chicago Union Station
- June** – Executive Committee
- July** – TBA
- August** – Bangor
- 23 September** – Durand Union Station
- 21 October** – Grand Rapids
- 4 November** – tentative Dearborn
- December** – Executive Committee

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

Midwest Regional Rail Stakeholder's Workshop

Reprinted from Midwest High Speed Rail Association

The Midwest High Speed Rail Association participated in the latest gathering of the **Midwest Regional Rail Plan**. We're optimistic about this FRA-led process because it's evaluating opportunities for high-speed and conventional rail across the Midwest in a comprehensive network. Too often, planning studies focus narrowly on a single corridor or geography, missing the cumulative effects that an integrated, connected network offers.

The study's CONNECT model has broken the Midwest into sub-regions, each with many different route and network configurations connecting back to the region's hub in Chicago. The model evaluates the cost and benefits of different speeds and levels of rail service on each segment, from the relatively slow and infrequent service that is often considered normal today, to true high-speed rail with trains every hour traveling at more than 150 mph.

At this point, the study is starting to prioritize certain network and route configurations over others. For instance, the northwest sub-region is Chicago to the Twin Cities, plus intermediate destinations throughout Wisconsin and Minnesota. The model concluded the best route is via Milwaukee and Madison, possibly through Rochester, but not through Green Bay or Fond du Lac, which are instead connected by a spur service to Milwaukee. Importantly, the model determined the service must be truly high-speed, making the trip from Chicago to Minneapolis in about 3.5 hours, [in order] to be competitive with flying or driving and recoup the most costs. This meshes with our basic assumptions about high-speed rail: it must be truly fast and frequent.

In some cases, the model produces less clear results about one route structure over another. This is where the human element comes into play, and stakeholder input is used to help make decisions the model can't. For instance, we were surprised to see the model recommend a slower, 4-hour service from Chicago to St. Louis, when true high-speed rail would make [the trip in] only 2 hours. Midwest High Speed Rail Association will continue to be engaged with the FRA and other stakeholders to address concerns like this.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW ALL WORKSHOP DOCUMENTS](#)



MARP Member Meeting
Saturday, October 21
10:00 am – Noon
Grand Rapids Transportation Center
250 Grandville Ave SW, Grand Rapids MI 49503
[Map & Directions](#)

MARP will meet in the 2nd floor Conference Room in the GR Transportation Center, just north of the new Amtrak station. This will be an opportunity for members to brainstorm ideas for MARP activities over the next twelve months. Details on the website www.marp.org Or send email to marprail@yahoo.com.



It's NARP's 50th Anniversary!

Thursday, November 2 — Sunday, November 5, 2017

Join the celebration in NARP's 1967 Birthplace

Host Hotel: Historic Millennium Knickerbocker

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO REGISTER](#)

RAILNATION CHICAGO

Keynote Speaker

Amtrak's New CEO

RICHARD ANDERSON

Four days packed with an exciting array of presentations, speakers, exhibits, tours, and events. Hear from leaders in industry, advocacy and public policy tackling issues such as: Positive Train Control; finding creative ways to finance new rail service and rolling stock; covering the "Last Mile"; new on-board technologies and much, much more!

Celebrating NARP's accomplishments over the past 50 years and looking ahead to the future of passenger rail in the United States

Amtrak and Lyft Announce Rideshare Partnership

Amtrak News Release, 1 August 2017

WASHINGTON – Amtrak and Lyft, the fastest growing rideshare company in the U.S., are making it easier to go more places. We know most trips don't start or end at an Amtrak station. This exciting partnership with Lyft is one of the ways we are working to make it easier for travelers to get where they're going in a safe, comfortable and convenient way.

Beginning August 1, customers can use the **Amtrak mobile app** to access the Lyft app to request a ride. New users of Lyft will receive \$5 off each of their first four Lyft rides by using the promo code AMTRAKLYFT. Lyft operates in more than 360 communities across the U.S., covering 80 percent of the U.S. population and reaching 97 percent of Amtrak riders. This partnership allows for a seamless end-to-end travel experience from your doorstep to an Amtrak station.

"We are focused on improving the customer experience, and this is one way we are working to make your entire journey as seamless and enjoyable as possible."

— Jason Molfetas, Amtrak VP for Marketing and Business Development

Michigan Ridership Rebounds

In the fiscal year that ended 30 September 2017, ridership on Michigan trains showed healthy gains, carrying 738,837 passengers in FY 2017 as compared with 684,202 in the previous fiscal year.

Ridership on the *Wolverine* route accounted for much of the gain, increasing from 411,863 in FY 2016 to 459,355 in the fiscal year just completed.

Extensive track and signal work on the *Wolverine* line, particularly over the previous two years, along with an improving economy and low gasoline prices, have all contributed to the lower ridership numbers since 2013 when Michigan set a ridership record of 804,697.

Michigan's other two lines also experienced year-over-year increases. The *Blue Water* route carried 186,282 riders in FY2017 compared to 183,069 in the previous year. Ridership on the *Pere Marquette* route increased from 89,508 to 93,449.

Northwest Ohio Passenger Rail Association

presents



Passenger Rail Forum

Monday, October 23, 2017

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

The Toledo Club

235 14th Street, Toledo, Ohio

J. Craig Thorpe

Visionary Rail Artist

"Painting the Possible"

<http://jcraigthorpe.com/artist-profile/>

Rick Harnish

Update on Midwest Rail Planning

\$30 NOPRA and TMACOG members, \$35 non-members, \$25 students

Luncheon buffet included

[REGISTER HERE](#)